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A Talk about Bishops.

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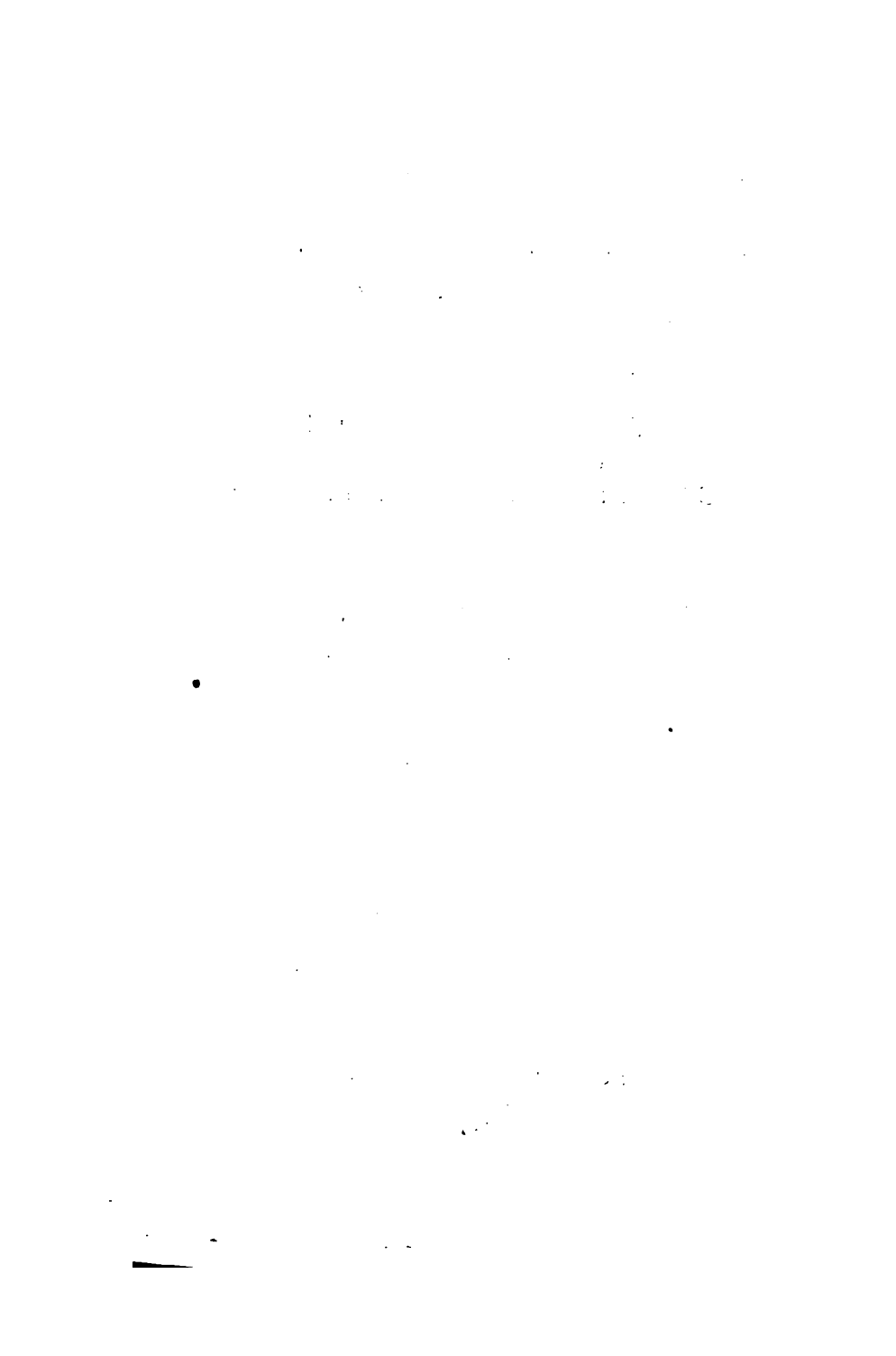
BEING
A DISCUSSION
UPON THE NATURE OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

BY
THOS. LUCAS SCOTT, A.M.,
Rector of Lower Moville, and Canon of Derry Cathedral.



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Preface.

IN the year 1876 I was engaged to preach in a town in a neighbouring Diocese, in behalf of their Episcopal Endowment Fund. Before I had quite decided upon the precise line of my appeal, a Presbyterian friend directed my attention to a leading article in a local newspaper which has long been remarkable for its bitterness against the Church.

The office of this paper has been burned, and I am unable to procure a copy of this article which I have never seen since. But, as well as I can remember, it contained sentences to this effect: "Episcopacy is too costly a luxury for a disendowed Church." "Prelacy contains a principle which would destroy any commercial undertaking." The "Church in the time of the Apostles did very well without it." "The Church of the first centuries did very well without it." "The Presbyterian Church in all its branches throughout all the world does very well without it." Those statements were of course ludicrously untrue and the article worthless.

But there was a popular notion in the neighbourhood, that the articles in this newspaper were inspired by an Ex-Moderator of the General Assembly, who was President of the Magee Theological College. This idea gave the paper a weight with many which it would not otherwise have obtained. And no other line of argument being suggested to me, I made the answers to these statements serve as the ground of my appeal upon the following Sunday.

Some of the congregation suggested that the sermon might be printed for circulation, But the Rector of the Parish said that it might perhaps be more useful, if the lines of argument at which it glanced were expanded into a popular treatise, which he could place in the hands of any who needed information.

This was the origin of this little work, which makes no large pretensions, attempting only to put into a popular shape the arguments with which students are familiar.

Many other authors might have been quoted and other subjects introduced, but these are probably sufficient to shew the formidable strength of our argument, and may themselves exhaust the patience of my readers. I hope that all will recognise how freely I have availed myself of the labours of Hooker, Bingham, Wordsworth, Boyd, Haddan, and Lightfoot, and credit me with a desire to quote honestly from the ancient writers to whom I have appealed.

THE PARSONAGE, MOVILLE,
October 16th, 1878.



A Talk about Bishops.

First Part.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH SYSTEM EXPLAINED.

LAWYERS, I suppose, are often startled by chance sayings which reveal most wonderful ignorance of their profession. Certainly, the clergy have this little excitement to more than their heart's content.

I remember chatting with a young barrister in the summer of 1869, while the Irish Church Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons. He almost took away my breath by observing, very quietly :—

“The Presbyterians say that, if this Bill passes, we shall all become Presbyterians. I tell them there is no chance of that. But I suppose we shall not be able to afford any more Bishops.”

I looked into his face for even the ghost of a smile to tell me that he was joking ; but not a smile or a trace of humour was there. I had to rouse myself to the occasion, and try to wake him up :—

“What are Presbyterians?”

“Presbyterians? Nonsense ; you know what they are as well as I do.”

“I think I do ; but would you mind telling me what you really think they are? Are they birds, beasts, or fishes?”

"Nonsense ; you know the Buchanans are Presbyterians, and the M'Intyres. There is one of their Meeting-houses among the trees up on the hill. What in the world do you mean by asking me what they are?"

"I mean, what are the principles of Presbyterianism? What are the differences which you think will always exist between them and us, whether this Church Bill passes or not? You say you were told that when it passes we shall all become Presbyterians? Now, before we can agree with that, or disagree with it, we must have some faint notion what Presbyterians are, and what we are."

"Why, they are Dissenters, and we are the Church."

"Yes ; so the State says to-day about this particular island. But, if we were to sail to Scotland, we should find the State saying that *they* were the Church, and *we* the Dissenters. And if the Church Bill passes, as I suppose it will, the State will say nothing at all about us ; or, if it pronounces upon our religion at all, will speak of us as two voluntary societies, or companies, of Christians, each dissenting from the other, and neither of them, or each of them, what it would call a Church. In the eyes of the State we shall then stand upon exactly the same level as the Presbyterians, and so, to that extent, become like them. There is so much truth in what you hear. In the eyes of the State, and in the eyes of those who value only our establishment and endowments, disestablishment will make us just like the Presbyterians."

"Oh, but they meant that we should give up our Prayer-book."

"Possibly ; but if so, they must have thought that the Prayer-book is another distinction between us and them. Will you tell me whether you know of any other distinction between us and the Presbyterians, beside our establishment, our endowments, and our Prayer-book."

"I suppose we differ about doctrines?"

"We do. We differ about the character of God the Father, and His love for the human beings He has Himself created⁽¹⁾. We differ about the extent, the nature, and the results of the atonement effected by God the Son⁽²⁾. We differ about the mode in which God the Holy Ghost works upon human hearts⁽³⁾. In practice⁽⁴⁾ we differ about the importance of holding a recognised place in God's great Society, the Church, which He purchased with His own blood. We differ about the value of the two Sacraments which Christ our Lord appointed with His own lips; and we

(1). "O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live." (*Collect for Good Friday*). "The rest of mankind God was pleased . . . to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice." (!)—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, chap. iii. 7.

(2). "God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind." (*Church Catechism*). "To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same." (*West. Con. of Faith*, ch. viii. 8). and "The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for *all the sins of the whole world*." (*Art. xxxi.*) "Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the *sins of his people*."—*Larger Catechism*, q. 44.

(3). "The grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will." (*Art. x.*) "The effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, *not from anything at all* foreseen in man's, who is *altogether passive* therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit he is thereby enabled to answer this call."—*West. Con. of Faith*, chap. x. 2.

(4). The statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith do not seem to be substantially different from those in our own Book of Common Prayer, upon the points which are next mentioned; but *practically* the Presbyterian ministers and people of the North of Ireland would almost unanimously assert the differences named here between them and us; and would shrink from the plain meaning of such a statement as this—"A sacrament is a holy ordinance, whereby *Christ* and the benefits of the new covenant are represented sealed and *applied* to believers."—*Shorter Catechism*, q. 92.

differ about the constitution and ministry of the Church, and also about the mode of extending it, and the method of Church worship. But we have not yet decided which of all these differences it is which gives us each our peculiar nicknames. You know of course what they call us."

"Episcopalians, I think."

"Yes; do you know the meaning of that name?"

"Come, now; I am not going to be catechised any longer. I see I have made a mess of it. Tell me, like a good fellow, something of the real state of the case between us."

"The real state is easily told. We call them Presbyterians, because they think that Christ and His apostles meant the Church to have only one order (or rank) of ministers, the order of Presbyter, which is held by an ordinary parish clergyman like myself. The name 'Presbyter' means 'Elder,' but has become shortened with us into 'Prester' and then 'Priest,' and is the origin of the French word 'Prêtre.' According to the Presbyterians, these ought to be the only holders of office in the Church. But some of their 'Elders' confine their attention to managing the business of the congregation, and are called 'Ruling Elders.' Others devote themselves to the work of teaching and preaching, and are the only 'Elders' that they are in the habit of comparing with our clergy, applying the term 'Reverend' to them, and calling them 'Ministers.' Many Presbyterian writers have admitted that there was in the primitive Church a lower order of Deacons, and seem to regret that they have not been able to retain it. But this, I think, is only their private opinion. The actual fact is, that they have but one grade or class of ministers, who are set apart for their office by the laying on of the hands of others that are already holders of this same office into which they admit their younger brethren⁽⁵⁾. This is the

(5). It may seem strange that in the above I have entirely

reason why they are called Presbyterians. It is because they have but the one order of officers in their communion, those whom they call Presbyters (or Elders).

ignored the Westminster Confession of Faith, which appears to make the Ruling Elder a separate Church Officer quite distinct from the Minister, and which also speaks of the Deacons as a permanent order of office-bearers in the Church. This omission has been as deliberate on my part as on that of ordinary defenders of Presbyterianism. The line taken by the Confession of Faith has to be abandoned as untenable. It upholds three distinct orders—Ministers, Elders, and Deacons,—and therefore destroys the favourite Presbyterian appeals about a simple ministerial parity. It condemns their annihilation of the order of Deacon; and it destroys the arguments (which are examined below in chap. xi.) from Acts xiv. 23, and 1 Tim. v. 17. These are applicable only if the Elders who rule well and those who labour in the word and doctrine are of the same order, with the same powers, and classed together as Elders. Both of these antagonistic positions are, however, sometimes flashed before our astonished eyes, in order to condemn us for ignorance in speaking of lay-elders, and at the same time to exalt their own liberality in admitting elders as laymen to their General Assemblies. As their elders are thus treated as both clergymen and laymen, I have thought it most generous to give them here the position which suits them best in the present controversy. I do not, however, attempt to reconcile such statements as the following:—"Other Church-Governors.—As there were in the Jewish Church elders of the people *joined with the priests* and Levites in the government of the Church; so Christ, who hath instituted government and governors ecclesiastical in the Church, hath furnished some in his Church, *beside the ministers of the word*, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto, who are to *join with the minister* in the government of the Church, which officers reformed churches commonly call Elders. Deacons.—The Scripture doth hold out deacons as distinct officers in the Church, whose office is perpetual." (*Confession of Faith.—The form of Church Government.*) "*All elders*, being bishops, have an equal right according to the Scriptures, to preach, baptise, administer the Lord's Supper, and *ordain*; but these duties are usually devolved on one of the elders called by distinction the *minister*, who is by general consent admitted to possess most gifts and attainments, and who is in consequence the best qualified to make these ordinances edifying to the Church; while the majority of the elders only rule, visit the sick, superintend Sabbath-schools, conduct prayer-

Then they call us Episcopalians, because we have not only an order of Deacons (or Servants) under the Presbyters, but also an order of Overseers or Superintendents, called Bishops, over the Presbyters. Those who are officered by Presbyters are called Presbyterian. We whose chief officers are Bishops are called Episcopalians. If they are in a bad humour with us they call us Prelatists, because we have the Episcopal order over or before the others, and indeed a regular system of ranks fitting in, the one above the other⁽⁶⁾. And now that you hear the meaning of the words, I think you can understand how you staggered me, when you said 'There is no chance of our becoming Presbyterians, even if we do give up our Bishops.'

"I see. The whole question whether we shall remain Episcopalians or not depends upon whether

meetings, and make themselves useful in other ways. *A minister is simply an elder*, educated especially for this work, and giving his whole time to the discharge of pastoral duty. Between him and elders who do not labour in word and doctrine, *there is no official difference*, merely a difference in gifts and training, in usefulness and honour." (*An Inquiry into the Scriptural Form of Church Government*, by the Rev. Thos. Witherow, Professor of Church History and Pastoral Theology in the Magee College, Londonderry, Ireland, p. 95). Yet this is in direct opposition upon at least one point to the teaching of their Confession of Faith, which confines the power of *ordaining* to the preaching presbyters. "The preaching presbyters orderly associated, either in cities or neighbouring villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain for those congregations within their bounds respectively." (*Con. of Faith—Form of Church Government*). What would happen in case a ruling elder were considered by a majority of the congregation to have gradually acquired larger gifts than the minister, I do not know. Would he have to be re-ordained? or would he receive authority to join the imposition of hands because of his recent practice of preaching? Mr. Witherow avails himself of an excellent opportunity for silence about the absence of Deacons among Presbyterians.

(6). The derivation of the three ecclesiastical titles may as well be mentioned here:—1. *Ἐπίσκοπος* (Episcopus), bishop or overseer. 2. *Πρεσβύτερος* ('Presbyter,' shortened into 'Prester,' 'Prêtre,' 'Priest,') an elder. 3. *Διάκονος* (Deacons), servant. Prelate is derived from *Prelatus*, 'placed in front.'

we do or do not retain the office of the Bishop. As long as we keep it we are Episcopalians; as soon as we lose it we become Presbyterians. It was very stupid of me to be sure. But now it seems to be a very serious question for us, whether we shall or shall not be able to afford Episcopacy if this wretched Bill passes."

"But are you quite sure it was so very stupid of you?" broke in my nephew, Frank Hazlewood, just gazetted to the —th Regiment. "My uncle has been talking as if the only clergy we have are our bishops, priests, and deacons. He has deluded you into forgetting the deans, archdeacons, rural deans, canons, prebendaries, rectors, curates,—yes, and archbishops and metropolitans. Ours is a far more complicated system than the imaginary one that he has been palming off upon you" (7).

"Not at all, Master Frank; those names, which you have just repeated, describe only the various positions in which our bishops, priests, and deacons may be placed. But if you look at your Prayer-book you will see that we have only three Ordination Services—one for ordaining deacons; a second for admitting deacons into the higher order of the priesthood, and the third for consecrating a priest to be a bishop. Again, if you think of the petitions (or suffrages) in the Litany, you will remember that we pray 'that it may please God to illuminate all bishops, priests, and deacons.' You might have suspected, therefore, that these three include all the clergy of all degrees in the Church. The army, you know, has its commander-in-chief, its field-m Marshals,

(7). I hope that none will think too hardly of my nephew because of his ignorance of ecclesiastical matters, since that ignorance has been shared by men in more pretentious positions, as the following extract will show:—"Prelacy is that system of Church government which is dispensed by archbishops, bishops, deans, priests, deacons, and other office-bearers."—*An Inquiry into the Scriptural Form of Church Government*, by the Rev. Thos. Witherow, *Professor of Church History and Pastoral Theology* in the Magee College, Londonderry, Ireland.

generals, colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, ensigns, sergeants, corporals, and so forth ; yet I have heard you speak of them all as commissioned and non-commissioned officers. In the same way we sometimes speak of ours as overseers and workmen, or bishops and curates, as in the prayer for the church militant. And, although in addressing each we give him the title of his position, we have still only three distinct orders. First, the Deacon, who is not yet in full orders, but appointed to assist the priest by relieving him from the more servile and secular works, and by acting under his superintendence ; Secondly, the Priest, who is fully empowered to execute the work of the Christian ministry, and is therefore said to be in full orders ; and Thirdly, the Bishop, who has not only the right of executing the priest's office, but also the power of conveying that office to others by laying his hands upon them. The bishops, therefore, are employed to superintend districts in which several priests and deacons are working ; also to confirm the baptised into full membership with the Church, and to consecrate churches ; but these last powers have not been invariably confined, as ordination has been, to this third and highest order in the ministry."

"Then, what is the good of having all those other titles? are they merely for ornament?"

"I might retort by asking you what is the meaning of all your military titles? are they only for ornament? If I did, you would tell me that each title which is held by a commissioned or non-commissioned officer, marks his place in the military system ; and that its system of divisions and subdivisions, each under its proper officer, makes the whole army as workable as a machine, and enables the general to move it at his pleasure. Is not that the fact?"

"Something like it ; but I am afraid you would hardly pass for a commission."

"Never mind ; it will do well enough for an illustration. Now look at our ecclesiastical army. Suppose

you find half-a-million of Christians in an island, organised as a Church under five bishops. You will find one of these bishops with a sort of elder brother's precedence, having the right of acting as their chairman, convener, and leader, yet with no distinct powers which the others have not as well as he. He has a precedence, but no office distinct from theirs. His precedence among them is merely a very ancient ecclesiastical arrangement to promote order and ensure combined action ; but over his own priests, deacons, and laity he has no power or authority distinct from that which all other bishops have over theirs. Yet, being their leader, he is called their Archbishop, Primus, or Primate ; or, when the precedence is attached to the mother city of the Church, he is called the Metropolitan of the whole province (which in the supposed case is the whole island). The other bishops there are called his Suffragans, because they assist him with their suffrages, or votes, in his synods or councils. So much for the distinctive titles within the Episcopal order.

Come now to the different titles which you find in the diocese⁽⁸⁾ over which each bishop rules. Each has (say a hundred) clergy to superintend. He selects one, or perhaps two of them to act as his chief servants, and they are called his Archdeacons⁽⁹⁾. They in

(8). Diocese, from *Διοίκησις*, or household. The larger district presided over by a Bishop which we now call his Diocese, was originally called by a cognate word (*παρoικία*) from which our words 'Parochial' and 'Parish' are derived. But these last terms are now confined to the smaller district entrusted to a Presbyter.

(9). Though the Archdeacon in these last days of the Church is chosen from among the Presbyters, yet anciently the office was exercised by a Deacon. Some (as Salmasius) think he was only the senior Deacon, but we have proof that, at least in the time of Athanasius, the office was elective and for special objects. He was chosen by the Bishop to attend him at the altar ; and to order all things relating to the inferior clerics (Janitors, &c.), and their ministrations in the Church ; to assist the Bishop in

their turn have their clergy in each archdeaconry subdivided into small groups, or chapters, called rural deaneries. In each of these the Tenth, called the Rural Dean,⁽¹⁰⁾ acts as the convener of his chapter, and is expected to keep the archdeacon and bishop informed of all matters calling for their attention.

In addition to this machinery for the regular pastoral superintendence of his diocese, each bishop has a picked staff, or chapter, or canon ⁽¹¹⁾ of ten attached to his cathedral, as we call the church in which he has his seat ⁽¹²⁾. If these ten have parishes to *furnish* them with the means of living, their parishes are called 'Prebends'⁽¹³⁾, and the clergy 'Prebendaries.' In other cases they are called only Canons, as belonging to the roll or staff of such bishop or cathedral. They, under their Dean, ought to act as a council to the Bishop, and assist him in stimulating the spiritual life and Church worship of the diocese; but I must confess that I have not yet seen them paying much attention to this in Ireland.

managing the Church's revenues, in preaching, and in ordaining the inferior clerics by handing to them some of the vessels or utensils of the Church, while the Bishop informed them of the special duties which they were being authorised to perform.—See Bingham's *Antiquities*, vol. i. bk. vii.

(10). Dean.—The title of Dean rose first within the monasteries, where the monks were divided into groups, with officers over each group. Every ten monks were subject to one who was called the Decanus (or Dean), from the fact of his presiding over ten (*decem*). Our present Deans are supposed by many to hold an office corresponding to that of the Arch-Presbyter of old, who used to preside among the Presbyters in much the same way as the Archdeacon did among the Deacons. But practically, the Archdeacon of the present day performs most of the duties that would in old times have been distributed between the Arch Priest and Archdeacon.—See Bingham, vol. i., bk. vii., c. iii., sec. II.

(11). 'Canon,' from *Κανών*, a rule. 'Chapter,' from *Caput*, a head.

(12). *Καθέδρα*, seat.

(13). 'Prebend,' 'Prebendary,' from *Præbeo*, to furnish or provide.

The only names which remain now, I think, are those of Rector and Curate. These are hardly to be called ecclesiastical titles at all, as they are popularly used. 'Curate'⁽¹⁴⁾ properly denotes any one who has the *care* and *charge* of a parish, but when two clergymen are working together in a parish, as priest in charge and his assistant, the former is usually called the Rector (or Ruler) and the latter his Curate. Hence the former has come in England to have a legal significance as connected with the payment of tithes; but in the Prayer-book it is unknown, and the word Curate is used simply for the clergy⁽¹⁵⁾ who are in charge of either parishes or congregations.

In spite, however, of all this variety of title and work, there are really only two distinct orders in the Christian ministry, the Deacon being only an apprentice, as it were, and an assistant, not fully entrusted

(14). 'Curate,' from *Cura*, a care or charge. 'Rector,' a ruler. 'Vicar,' from *Vicarius*, a substitute (for the Rector).

(15). Jerome tells us that the word *Clericus* (whence clergy, clerk, clerical), comes from the Greek *κλῆρος*, which signifies, a lot; and he says God's ministers were called *Clerici*, either because they are the lot and portion of the Lord, or because the Lord is their lot and inheritance, as with the Levites (Deut. x. 9). There was a time when all persons who had any public employment in the Church were called by the common name of Clerici, which at first had been confined to the three orders only of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. It was in the third century that the inferior orders such as sub-deacons, readers, acolytes, &c., were introduced, and they also were then called 'Clerici' (see Cyprian, Ep. 24; 33). Indeed the Third Council of Carthage seems to appropriate the name to these last by way of distinction from the original three; and in this it is followed by Ambrose (de dign. sacerdot., c. 3), Hilary (Pseud. Ambr. in Ephes. iv.), and Epiphanius. (Her. 68, Melet). (See Bingham, vol. i., book i., c. 5). Hence we often apply the name 'Clerk' to such church officers as are not in Holy Orders. In the Burial Office, for example, the Rubric directs that "the priest and clerks, meeting the corpse . . . shall say or sing." It is to distinguish ourselves from such that priests of the Church often style themselves Clerks in Holy Orders.

with the office of the Ministry⁽¹⁶⁾,"

"I declare you seem to have a tolerably good machinery—if you would only work it properly."

"Thank you for your good opinion," I answered; "but perhaps you will not now contradict my assertion. We who are Episcopalians, have three orders in the sacred ministry, and can no more give up bishops without becoming Presbyterians, than Presbyterians can submit themselves to bishops without becoming Episcopalians. As the Church exists in the United States, so we may exist here, without deans, archdeacons, canons, or archbishops; but without bishops, and without priests and deacons ordained by bishops, we break down at once, and cease to be an Episcopal Church at all"⁽¹⁷⁾.

"Thank you," said Andrews. "I think I see it now. But I feel as much as ever the importance of the question which I put a little while ago. Will it be wise for us to keep up the office of bishop, and remain Episcopalians? I am not denying that it is a very nice thing; but may it not be a little too nice a thing for us—too costly a luxury for a disendowed Church? I do not mean the least disrespect to any of our present bishops; but I fancy that if we are able to keep up the incomes of our ordinary clergy, and

(16). The word 'Ministry' is a title usually reserved for those ministers or servants of Jesus Christ who serve Him in some official capacity, and are distinguished from the laity (*laos*) or people, by being called pre-eminently His ministers, although, strictly speaking, all the baptised are enrolled as servants (*ministri*) of Christ, to serve Him "each in this own vocation and ministry."

(17). Church from *Κυριακός*, belonging to a lord (*κύριος*), especially belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ. *ἡ κυριακή*, the Lord's day, *τὸ κυριακόν*, the Lord's house, hence 'kyrke,' 'kirk,' 'church.' The Society which the Lord founded, over which He presides, and which is His own peculiar family, this is the Church. Every integral part of it, every building appropriated to its use shares the name, not as though there are many churches, but because the one universal Church makes its presence felt in each of these, as we meet the ocean everywhere and say it is the sea.

keep our churches and parsonages in repair, it will be about as much as we shall be able to do well. And it seems to me that, if we do come to be disendowed, it may be as well for us to do without bishops for a time, until we see whether we can afford them or not. Bye-and-bye, perhaps, if we get on as I hope and trust we shall, we may be able to get them up again ; but at first we had better make sure we can stand before we try to walk, and walk before we try to run. What do you think of that, Rector ?”

“ I do not think much of it,” I said very decidedly, “ and for this reason——.”

But I had better keep the reason for another chapter, and explain there how my indignation was held in check for a few minutes.





CHAPTER II.

THE COST OF EPISCOPACY.

WHILE we were discussing these ecclesiastical titles we were walking along the Kingsbury road; for my two friends were accompanying me on my way to a parishioner, whose house stood about two miles from the Rectory. Our argument was interrupted for a few minutes, while I wrote down my message on a card and gave it to the footman. Intending to return along the river bank, we then took a short cut through the garden; and there we came upon Master Harry, a sturdy little fellow, nearly five years old. He was just then rejoicing in his little garden, of which he looked intensely proud. And, to do him justice, it really did look extremely bright and gay. The whole bed, about three feet long by one and a-half wide, was carpeted with flowers of the most extraordinary variety. He edged away at the sight of my two friends, but stood at a little distance, with the fingers of one hand in his mouth, while the other clasped its wrist, and from under his eyebrows he watched our inspection.

"Poor little fellow," said Andrews, "what a terrible disappointment is in store for him."

"How so?" asked Hazelwood.

"Because there is not one root or real plant in the whole bed. He has picked all these flowers off the plants in his father's garden and stuck them in the clay. Poor little fellow! he looks so proud and happy now. He will fall asleep dreaming of it, and first

thing to-morrow morning he will run down with his little spade, and find nothing but withered leaves and shrivelled stalks." Poor little fellow! how impossible it would be to persuade him now that there is anything wanting; that he ought to have any of those stupid plants or ugly black roots, which are always under ground, and make no show at all outside. And so his little flower bed is all a toy and a delusion."

"What a wretched state for a diocese," I said.

"What on earth do you mean by your diocese?"

"I mean that our own diocese, or our own Irish Church, without a bishop, would be just as great a delusion as little Harry's garden without a root or plant in it. As long as his father has a real garden, with roots and plants, and as long as he allows his son to pick his flowers, so long little Harry's may have a short-lived beauty. But, until he has himself within his own bed the power of producing other flowers when these are faded or removed, his flower-bed is, as you call it, only a toy and a delusion.

Now, with us the bishops are the only persons who have authority to ordain clergy. They are the roots from which all our ecclesiastical offices spring. If, therefore, we are to have no bishops at all, we shall have no power at all of producing fresh clergy. As long as our present clergy last and remain with us, so long the Church services may be kept up, and our Church seem to be bright and flourishing. And as long as the mother-Church in England has bishops, and allows us to pick up her clergy and plant them here, and then go back for more when these are gone, so long we may seem to be a Church. But what would this really be, if it contained only some dozen groups of clergymen, bribed by higher pay to come over to us from England in order to minister to our scattered congregations? Would it not be really the same sort of toy which little Harry's garden is? And a very costly toy it would be. The additional pay

which each of a hundred parishes would have to give each year, in order to induce a clergyman ordained in England to work here and not there, would be considerably more than twenty pounds a year, and those additions alone would provide two thousand a year for a bishop.

But would the plan be satisfactory in any way? Are you, who are so careless about bishops, so satisfied of the universal soundness of the English Church's teaching and customs, and of its sympathy with you, that you would always be contented to take as your future clergy, men who had been educated at Oxford and Cambridge, but who expected to make more by coming to Ireland than by remaining in England; men who had been ordained by English bishops, and whose characters could be known here only by testimonials; men whom, once they were here, you would have no means of checking, except by diminishing their yearly income? Is there an Irish Churchman or Churchwoman who would be content with such a mockery as this?"

"Well, no; I suppose not. But we might select some of our own sons here and send them over for ordination?"

"And do you really think that English bishops would ordain them without enquiring of them, and examining what their education and opinions were; or indeed ordain them at all for such a wilderness and bear-garden as our Irish Church would in that case be? And any who were worth anything, and who satisfied the English bishops of their real worth, do you think they would not be induced to remain for the far larger, more orderly, and living work which they would find in England. No; Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists have arranged their systems to work without bishops, and after their manner those systems do work without them. But our Church system is not so arranged; whether for good or for evil, our whole system is an Episcopal system. The Bishop's office is not a

mere extra floating on the surface, but the very root and foundation of our whole framework. Remove it, or allow it to die out, and at once our whole constitution becomes a mockery; a mockery too expensive and too unreal to last more than a few years; and then our name as a Church would be blotted out and deserve to be blotted out for ever; our candlestick would be removed from its place, and none on earth would mourn for it. Cutting off Episcopacy from us would be cutting off the root from the flower, stopping the waters at the fountain. At once our whole system would collapse, because our whole supply of clergy would cease; our society would become disorganised, our army would become a mob, and our Church a delusion."

"Why; you have grown quite excited over it."

"And no wonder. It is a wretched thing to think how silent our clergy have been on all these points, so that now, when we are about to be launched upon an unknown sea, such good-hearted, intelligent fellows as you are know so little about the very alphabet of our constitution, that you actually think we may remain Episcopalians without bishops."

"You think, I suppose, that it would be like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out of it."

"Exactly, Frank. But now, that I have let off steam a little, I am quite ready to listen to all that Andrews can say against the bishops; and he must speak as freely as if I were perfectly indifferent and unimpassioned in the matter."

"Oh! I never had any great objection to bishops; and I have certainly no desire to express any now, since you explain that they are absolutely essential to our very existence as a Church. My only feeling was that it is rather an expensive system; but as we are in for it, we must just make the best of it, and put our hands deeper into our pockets."

"You think, then, that an Episcopal system is an extravagant system, more costly and expensive than

the Presbyterian?"

"Of course I do. The Presbyterian system, you tell me, consists in their employing no clergy at all except the ordinary ministers in charge of parishes. The Episcopal system employs these, and also an additional clergyman who is to oversee them and superintend them, and who must therefore occupy a higher and more responsible position than any of them. To secure the superior man for this superior post, we must be prepared to offer a superior income, say a thousand a year. Now, since this sum of a thousand pounds must be paid in addition to all the salaries of all the other clergy, our system must, of course, cost a thousand a year more for each bishop than the Presbyterian plan of doing without any. Nothing can be clearer than that."

"Certainly; if this sum must be paid in addition to the same salaries which would be paid without it, of course our system would cost more. But suppose you give a little less to each of the other clergy, what then? Suppose you give £140 to each of a hundred clergy, and £1,000 to their bishop, would that cost more than giving them each £150, and not employing a bishop at all?"

"Of course not," he answered, "£150 to each of a hundred clergy would come to £15,000; and £140 to each would come to only £14,000, and would leave £1,000 over for their bishop. But then that would be monstrously hard upon the other clergy."

"Do you suppose the help of a superintendent would not be worth £10 a year apiece to them? But even so, that is not the question yet. What I am now asking is, Would it cost more? Must an Episcopal system be in all cases a more expensive system?"

"Well, perhaps not more expensive. And yet—I am not sure—our object in offering a good scale of incomes in any profession is to secure a good class of candidates. Every diminution of the ordinary income must tend to reduce the number or the qualifications

of the men applying. You could not calculate upon attracting the same class of men by an offer of £140 as you would by the offer of £150. You would probably have to raise the extra £10 in order to secure the class of men you want, and then it would be more expensive, as I said. I put my objection therefore in this way. It would be a more expensive way of securing the same class of men for the ministry."

"Would it really? Think for a minute. You are forgetting that each of those hundred men has a chance of being selected for the bishopric and its one thousand a year; and many a man would think £10 a year not at all too high a charge for the assistance of a superintendent, as long as he was a presbyter, and his chance of the bishopric eventually. But look at the thing practically. You will soon have to choose the profession in which you will try to place your sons. Which would you prefer for them, other things being equal,—A profession in which they could be sure of £150 a year at once, though they would never be able to rise to anything higher? Or a profession in which they would be at once sure of £140, and might gain one of twelve prize positions, which would give a thousand a year each? Which would you recommend to them?"

"To tell the exact truth, I think I should make a difference between them. Jem is an extremely smart fellow, and is sure to rise to the top of the tree wherever he goes. He would have such a good chance of one of the prizes, that I should prefer the prize system for him. But though Tom is as good a fellow as ever lived, he is slow, and I should rather he was sure of the £150."

"Exactly: now you have it. A system of equal pay and equal position, though with a higher average payment, would bring us the dull, heavy (and not always the worthy) fellows, whom no one would expect to win a prize. But a system of smaller average, ornamented with some enticing prizes, would bring us the

class of men whose friends and relatives expect them to win prizes. If then we can only raise £15,000 a year for a diocese where we shall need one hundred clergy, our best financial plan will be to offer (if we can) a regularly graduated scale. Have, suppose, twenty beginners at £100 each; fifty at £120; twenty at £150; ten at £300, and one bishop at £1,000. Surely you must feel that such offers would induce a higher class of men to put their clever sons forward for the ministry, than the offer of a dull monotonous level of £150 a year. Look back at the past. Has not our Irish Church been able to secure candidates for orders from the very highest ranks of talent, education, and social position? And if so, why has it been so? Not because she offered a higher average payment to the clergy all round, for the ordinary clergy were notoriously under-paid; but because she had so many large prizes in the shape of bishoprics and rich livings. How is it that the Irish Bar has secured so many men of the highest ability? Not by insuring to them a good uniform certainty, for the briefless barristers may make absolutely nothing; but by offering splendid prizes to the most successful."

"There is something in that, I suppose?"

"Something in it? Of course there is. Did you ever add up the incomes attached to all the Irish livings and then divide them by the number of the Irish clergy? The whole would have given, I am told, hardly two hundred a year apiece to every one of them. Now how many parents, and what class of parents, would have pressed their sons to look forward to ordination, if this last had been our system; if they had known that when once he had been ordained, each man would have £200 a year secured to him, but could never under any circumstances rise to anything higher. The fact is, that one great inducement which has made parents give their sons an expensive education that they might be able to take orders, has been the knowledge of the many prizes in the Church,

and the great variety of motives which influence the various patrons of these prizes. Each parent could hope at least that one of them might fall to the lot of his son."

"But this system undoubtedly bore hard on numbers of very deserving men. It has been one of the scandals of our present system, that we have seen curates starving on £75 a year, while their bishops have been peers of the realm with nearly a hundred times their income."

"Of course," I said, "the principle has been exaggerated, and often badly applied. But rightly controlled and administered, nothing can be better than it. It gives a continual stimulus to men to exert themselves and rise from step to step and from post to post. The hardships of poverty are endured at the outset, while men are but apprentices, and while they are young and able to bear hardship; but when age approaches and families and expenses increase, then come the rise and the increased means, together with more jurisdiction and less physical toil for the man of matured experience."

"Then you think that our Episcopal system, which offers prizes of rank and responsibility and income, would, even in the future, be a wise arrangement, if we want to secure for the ministry men from the higher classes of intellect, education, and social position."

"I do, indeed. It has been proved so, wherever there is an Episcopal Church. You may perhaps say that the Churches of England and Ireland are not fair illustrations, because they have establishments and endowments to assist in enticing men. But look at the Episcopal Church of Scotland. See how much smaller and poorer it is than either the Established or Free Kirk. Yet its bishops and clergy will compare favourably with the ministers of either of those two wealthier bodies in education and birth. It is the same with the Episcopal Church in the United States, although it has not only no State support, but an

actual prejudice to contend against, from having been once established before the Revolution, and established by that very country against which they asserted their independence. The Episcopal Church in the colonies can show a staff of clergy more than equal to those who hold office among the Presbyterians, or Methodists, or Congregationalists. And even the deep poverty of the Moravians has never induced them to part with their system of superintendents and working ministers, which, like that of the Episcopal Methodists in America, was formed in avowed imitation of the Church system, in order to secure some of its practical advantages. Yet in all such cases I am sure that the financial success (if I may so call it) has been secured, not merely by the money prizes which are usually attached to leading positions, but also by the pleasure which is given to a large and noble mind when entrusted with great influence and opportunities of usefulness."

"I am glad to hear you speak of that last motive, Uncle; for I must say that you two had come down to very low ground, when you had to treat the whole question of Church government as if it were a mere matter of money."

"We were not treating it as a *mere* matter of money. And even if it was low ground, if it was solid ground of any kind, we had no right to despise it. And you must do me at least the justice to remember that it was not I who began to occupy that low ground. I merely went down to it, because Andrews went down to it. He objected to Episcopacy, on the ground that in the great trial in which the Irish Church is likely to be placed, we may not be able to afford Episcopacy. I have been trying to show that his objection does not hold; that Episcopacy is not an expensive system, but the most economical way of securing the highest class of candidates for office."

"I know it was I who began this discussion," said Andrews, "and I am not in the least ashamed of beginning it. People, who are very careful of their

own comforts, often talk as if a man is unfit to be a clergyman at all, who questions how he will be able to secure food and clothing, if he tries to serve God in the sacred Ministry rather than in any other profession. I think he may be just as earnest and devoted and self-denying, when he chooses the post where he seems likely to be most free from debt and poverty. And I say further, that people are continually forgetting that the question, whether a man takes orders or not, depends in most cases upon his parents and friends, and upon their willingness to enable him to take orders. Now the money question will certainly enter very largely into their considerations, even if it does not into his.

So I am very much obliged to the Rector for helping me, even on this low matter of expense. I do not say that it is everything, but it certainly is something. I do not say whether he has convinced me or not, but there is something in it. And if we have to put our heads together and try to make out a plan for supporting our Church out of our own pockets, you may depend upon it, the money question will most certainly be brought forward, when we are discussing our system of Church government."

"It certainly will," I replied; "and though I should be bitterly ashamed of our Irish Churchmen if I found them making the whole question depend upon this, still I am quite certain that there is sound financial economy in the system of unequal steps and ranks and gradations among Church-officers, just as among military officers, and those who hold posts in large and extensive establishments of any kind. The principle of perfect equality among Christian ministers is not really carried out anywhere in financial matters. If it were attempted it would be found costly and impracticable, and would certainly war against the Apostolic rule—'Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of *double* honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.' (1 Tim. v. 17)."



CHAPTER III.

THE STRENGTH OF THE THREEFOLD SYSTEM.

S EVEN years had passed since the conversation that I have tried to record, and my friends, Andrews and Hazlewood, were again with me, sitting on a garden seat on the terrace under the Rectory.

"Do you remember the talk we had about Episcopacy in '69?" asked Andrews. "And do you still believe it to be an economical system?"

"I do indeed. Think how much harder it is to find curates now than it used to be. Yet they are much better paid now. You hardly ever hear of a rector offering less than £120, and the majority give £150. One reason for the scarcity is that, though the first start is better than it used to be, there is so much less to expect; there are so few prizes. Again, our Episcopal Endowment Funds are looking up, and it is perfectly clear now that it will be no extravagance for us to complete them. For example, the Episcopal Fund in the United Diocese of Down and Connor and Dromore is now so far advanced that annual payments of £2 from every parish will make up £2,000 a year for their future bishop. Surely, the possession of such a prize will do more to secure the highest class of men than dribbling out a wretched £2 extra to each new incumbent. What practical effect do you suppose the offer of £252 would have beyond what would be produced by the offer of £250? When we are using money as a motive to induce men to come to us, the

most effective way of using it will certainly be in the shape of prizes rather than in a common level of equal incomes."

"But I think you said that this is not your only reason for preferring a system of ranks and degrees in the Ministry of the Church."

"Most certainly not. It is one of the very lowest reasons. If you remember, I brought it forward only to answer your objection, when you complained of Episcopacy as a costly and extravagant luxury. I might have answered you by reminding you that a large income is in no way essential to the office of a bishop. Many parish livings have been made more lucrative than most colonial bishoprics; and in primitive times I am sure the bishops must have been often as poor as any of their clergy. But if you ask me the advantages of Episcopacy, and the arguments for it, I shall hardly know where to begin, or how to leave off."

"Well, let us hear you, Uncle, and in pity to our ignorance, begin at the very beginning."

"What do you suppose is the beginning?"

"Tell us why you have any clergy at all?"

"Certainly, if you will tell me why you have any officers at all in the army?"

"Officers in the army? Do you mean to say that you would have our soldiers an undisciplined, disorderly mob of redcoats? Look here. I was looking on at an awful row two or three years ago in the West. There was a mob of some four or five thousand, awfully savage, smashing everything before them. Our men were called out from barracks, just four companies. If you had seen how this compact little body, moving about at the word of command, dispersed that immense mob, you would have seen the value of discipline, and the power that an officered and organised regiment has over ten times their number in disorder."

"You think then that discipline gives union and strength. And I suppose you admit that there can be

no discipline without rules, or without officers to enforce those rules. Such officers and rules you find necessary in the army, and you ought to see that they must be just as necessary for the Christian army, if it is to be an army and not a mob. Think of the Christian Society which Christ founded in order to teach His message, do His work, and fight His battle against His enemies—think of it under any figure you please and you will see this. Take it as an army, you acknowledge that it must have its regularly appointed officers. Take it as a school, your very idea of a school tells you that it must have its regular teachers and masters. Take it as a great working establishment, all experience tells us it must have managers and overseers. Without officials there can be no system or co-operation, and without system and co-operation there can be no society at all: you have a mob, not an army; a rabble, not a society.”

“Now,” I went on, “if it is reasonable to have officers, it is hard to see how it can be unreasonable to have ranks among the officers. You find ranks among the officers in every army. You have higher and lower positions among masters in every large school. You find ranks and degrees among the managers and clerks in every large business establishment. You find ranks and degrees of responsibility and place among the officers of every society that I have ever heard of. Take the Freemasons, Orangemen, Good Templars. Is there one of these that has not its ascending scale of official rank—Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters, and so on? One gang of labourers may work under a single foreman; but if many gangs are co-operating together as one body, they have a superintendent or overseer over them all. Look at armies, societies, factories, establishments, governments, kingdoms. No really large company of people can have close and minute co-operation without a regular gradation of officers fitting in, the one above the other. So, under their king and his ministers, their president and his council, their

general and his officers, or their patron and his committee of management, the whole company can be moved with the precision of a machine, and the entire strength of the whole body brought to bear upon a single point.

Every argument that can be drawn from the practical experience of companies or societies, in favour of having any staff of officers at all in the Christian society, weighs just as strongly in favour of ranks and degrees among the officers; that is, in favour of prelacy, which is the preference system; or episcopacy, the superintendence system."

"If so, how do the Presbyterians manage to hold together?"

"They do not hold together very well. Look at Scotland, which has not as many inhabitants altogether as the one city of London has. The Presbyterians there are broken up into certainly four distinct bodies—(1) The Established Church, (2) the Free Church, (3) the Covenanters, and (4) the United Presbyterians. There have been also other departures from these at various times; such as the Morrisonians and Arians. But these four at least are clearly marked communions, each of them having its separate governing body and ecclesiastical system, though pretty nearly agreed upon the same code of doctrines and the same mode of worship⁽¹⁾.

But a more remarkable testimony to the practical usefulness of the Episcopal system is shown in this way. Each of these rival communions has been com-

(1). Although the Covenanters (or Reformed) are fast disappearing from Scotland, yet if I had been gifted with anything of the second sight of which we have so often heard in connection with Scotland, I might have mentioned here what was called the Pan-Presbyterian Synod of 1877. At one of its closing meetings an address to the Queen of England was signed by "333 names, representing 49 Churches in 25 countries." This average of two "churches" in every district which they dignify by the name of country, shews quite sufficient division to commend to us the more satisfactory organisation of the great Anglican Communion.

pelled to adopt an imitation of our prelatial system in order to hold its members together even as well as it does. They elect annually a superintendent, whom they call their Moderator, for each of their several presbyteries, and so secure a portion of that co-operation which the Church system naturally and necessarily secures to us.

Rival Assemblies and rival Moderators you see in Scotland, and even in Ireland where the members of all the Presbyterian communions together are considerably outnumbered by the members of our church. But how often, throughout the British dominions, do you find rival bishops. I admit the great schism of the West, which I believe to be mainly due to the extravagant pretensions by which the Bishop of Rome destroys the balance of the threefold system. Yet except for this, and for the occasional vagary of an individual bishop, whose little coterie of individuals disappears with their leaders, where do you meet with rival Episcopal communions (2).

(2). When the above was written, Bishops Cummins in America, Colenso in Africa, and Beckles in Scotland were known to have acted schismatically. But the year 1878 is marked by the first attempt to form in England a rival Episcopal sect within the Anglican communion. The history of the attempt is briefly this :—Dr. Cummins, Assistant Bishop of Kentucky, aided by five or six priests, took upon him in 1873 to revise the American Prayer-book, and organised a new Church in which Ritualism should be impossible. Before his death he “consecrated” Dr. Cheney one of his followers, who, among other irregular and schismatical acts, has, without the consent or co-operation of any bishop, “consecrated” Dr. Thomas Huband Gregg, formerly Vicar of Harborne Heath, near Birmingham, to act, not as Bishop of Kentucky or of any province on the continent of America, but apparently as Patriarch over the British Isles, and whatever portion of the continent of Europe he may feel disposed to govern. That such an attempt has not been made until this nineteenth century, and that this unauthorised and unreasonable action on the part of a few clergymen should excite any serious attention in the Church of England, are striking proofs of the strength and stability which are inherent in a threefold ministry.

It is to our system of Church government that we owe this freedom from schisms among ourselves. For inside our organisation we have parties and schools of thought differing from each other at least as widely as the different bodies of non-Episcopalians around us. Yet we are still bound together in the same system, in the same communion, and under the same bishops.

"How can you be quite sure that it is to our Episcopal system we owe this?"

"I can assure myself of it in this way. We see that any society that has something of this prelatial system, something of this arrangement for superintendence and subordination of offices, has always something of a compactness and united strength which others want. And we see that, as soon as a society which dislikes this system becomes large and powerful, it has to adopt some imitation of this principle in order to hold its large masses together. And further, we see the tremendous strength and compactness which the system gives to the Church of Rome."

"Do you mean to say that you expect good Protestants like Andrews and myself to take Popery for our guide? The truth is, that the one thing which makes me doubtful about Episcopacy is the unfortunate fact that we have borrowed it from the Church of Rome. I really do not know that there is anything else against it. And now you come and blurt this out, and expect us to like it, not merely in spite of this, but actually because of its smack of Popery."

"Protestants you are, and Protestants you may be, but I hope you are Christians and also men of a little common sense. You are not mad bulls, going to rush at Popery like a red rag, whenever you catch sight of it. You may just as well say that we ought to give up Baptism and Christianity itself, because the Roman Catholics value them as much as we do. Do you seriously mean to say that you are not going to listen to me any longer, because I have mentioned the mere name of the Church of Rome?"

"No, of course not. I only meant to put Andrews on his guard, and to wake him up to see that you are not palming off any Popish notions upon us."

"Well, then, open your eyes both of you, and look here. You think that the Church of Rome has tremendous discipline and power. Think it? You know it. You know how, time after time, indignant protests have burst out from some noble hearts within her pale: hearts which feel that they can bear no more encroachments upon their liberty. We think that there is going to be another great schism, and that whole dioceses with bishops, priests, and people will come out from her. But gradually their voices are stifled, they sink down again, and all is still and silent as the grave. Why surely no one ever doubted that the communion of Rome has an awful strength and compactness; that it is a vast machine admirably adapted for the double object of keeping its members together and also of propagating its opinions everywhere. It is tremendously successful in both these objects, though it has failed in the vitally important one of keeping the Gospel pure and unadulterated. Its members are bound together by a brotherhood intensely close. It has survived overwhelming argument and evidence, and still it holds together, and is likely to hold together.

Now, why is this? Where is the secret of her strength? It must lie in one of two things; either in the inherent excellence and truth of her peculiar doctrines, or else in the inherent strength of her ecclesiastical system. You, if you are good Protestants, cannot think that her strength lies in the truth or excellence of her peculiar doctrines; for so far as any of the doctrines that she teaches are true, so far we teach them as fully as she does. And where any of her doctrines are peculiar to herself, there they are falsehoods or fables, mischievous perversions or mischievous exaggerations of God's truth. Where, then, does her strength lie? Not in her doctrines; your

Protestantism forbids you to think that. It must lie in her ecclesiastical system, in her splendidly-arranged machinery of close and compact and watchful superintendence. Your very Protestantism, therefore, which rises up against her doctrines, ought to look with admiration at her machinery: not that you must say it is admirable for all purposes, but certainly admirable for preserving the union which is strength.

Even if you think of Rome as your enemy, an officer like Captain Hazlewood knows that we may learn valuable lessons from our enemies' tactics. If you want to resist the encroachments of the Church of Rome; if you want to oppose any of her perversions of God's message, you may throw out scouts, of course, and sharp-shooters as she does, but you must never dare to dash your forces irregularly and disorganised against the firm ranks of her disciplined army. No, you must meet system with system, discipline with discipline, and so power with power. How can we do this better than by employing all that is safe of her system of arrangement and superintendence in order to hold our people together, and to maintain and spread that teaching which we believe to be the very Gospel which the Apostles received and taught? Can we doubt that what has proved useful to her may also be useful to us? What she has found so valuable in her work, are we not likely to find that valuable in ours?

When, therefore, I find that the system which is universally adopted in other societies, such as armies, colleges, trades-unions, and brotherhoods, is a source of enormous power in one large branch of the Christian Church, I certainly think that the presumption is immensely in its favour. On the mere ground of natural fitness, on the ground of its being a reasonable system, and indeed the system which seems best fitted to bind us all together and give us the coherence and union and strength which we shall need now more than ever, when the State props have been taken away from us; on this ground alone I think we can

shew the wisdom of preserving our present system of Episcopacy."

"All this sounds very well," said Andrews, "but I cannot forget what insolence and profligacy and abuse of power have been connected with the very name of prelacy in the past."

"True ; awfully, miserably true. Yet if you are to use this as an argument against Prelacy, you may use it as an argument against Congregationalism, and Presbyterianism, and indeed any form of Church government whatever. There is not one branch of the Christian Church that has not shewn unchristian vices in the days of opportunity and temptation.

You may use this as an argument against money, and indeed against soldiers and lawyers also ; so that we three should all alike be put out of court. I grant you that it is an argument against entrusting any with absolute power, whether in Church or State. It is an argument in favour of having most carefully devised checks, which shall prevent the abuse of either episcopal, or sovereign, or military power. It is an argument against allowing our desire for compactness and strength to swallow up every other desire. It is an argument against allowing discipline to become tyranny, or union stagnation, or primacy infallible supremacy, as Rome has allowed these. But all the instances you can bring of individual worthlessness prove nothing against the offices that these worthless individuals held, though, of course, you may create enormous prejudice in common minds by associating certain vices with certain names. This is the secret of the bitterness with which so many Presbyterians hate our Episcopal offices ; but is it quite unreasonable. And there is no possibility of arguing against this bitterness. It has not been built upon reason, and so it cannot be undermined by reason, or they would have been convinced long ago."

"You still think, then, that we shall find our present system of Church government useful and economical

in the future ?”

“Certainly, if we take care to adapt it to our new circumstances. If we do not go on treating our bishops as if consecration made them peers of the realm and required them to live in lordly style ; if we no longer compel our clergy to attend to the multifarious offices which were left in their hands when there were so many of them ; and last, but not least, if our laity will take up actively and religiously the share of the work which they have the right to exercise, and which they used to exercise through the Crown.”

“I suppose, then, we are right in continuing Episcopacy ?”

“I rather think so ; but I hope you never mean to advocate Episcopacy on any of the grounds which we have yet mentioned. In all that I have been saying about expense and prudence, I have been trying merely to meet popular objections, trying to remove popular prejudice, and attempting to win a fair hearing for the real argument in favour of Episcopacy.”

“And what is this real argument ?”

“Divine authority. If we had at this moment to form ourselves into a society in order to maintain and spread the Christian religion, I believe that the wisest thing we could do would be to form ourselves into an Episcopal Society, with ranks and degrees among our officers. But we have not to attempt anything of the kind. We are already a Society, and this Society has already its settled constitution. That constitution has come down to us from the past. We have inherited it. When we look into the histories of the past to discover whence it came, we find that this Episcopal system has been in all ages a characteristic feature of the Church of Christ. When we search the Scriptures we find that this Society, of which ours is a regular Branch or Lodge, was founded by our Lord Himself, and came from His Divine hands with the principles of this threefold system imbedded in it.

Episcopacy has been from first to last one of the characteristic features of Christ's supernatural Society, and has, therefore, a Divine and supernatural authority."

"You do not mean to say that you think that you can prove all this?"

"I do, indeed. You have both of you listened to me so patiently, though I feel that I have been growing more long-winded as I have gone deeper, and become more interested in the argument, that I ought hardly to hope you will listen longer. But I confess I should like exceedingly to have an opportunity of shewing you the line of argument, and of hearing how it strikes you. I am so familiar with it myself, that I may be either over-rating or under-rating it; but if you hear it now for the first time, you will have a chance of setting its true value upon it."

"I am quite willing to listen to you," said Andrews, "for although I have known that high claims have been often made for Episcopacy, I have never yet heard them stated. And I think you have a certain amount of common sense, and if you are willing to submit your case to examination and criticism, you must fancy that it is pretty strong. What do you say, Hazlewood?"

"All right; I am up to it; but not to-day, thank you."

"Very well then, we shall end to-day with these two propositions:—

First. That the essential features of Episcopacy are the existence of ranks and degrees among the officers of the Christian Church; the employment of superintendents over and assistants under the ordinary ministers called priests or presbyters; and, together with the co-existence of these three offices, the fact that the authority to set apart men for any of these ministerial offices rests with the superintendents or bishops.

Secondly. That this system, upon which the entire constitution of our Church is founded, is not an extravagant or unreasonable system, but one which experience has shewn to be wise financially, and also

admirably calculated to give the society which inherits or adopts it, discipline and compactness and strength.

To-morrow we shall try to discover its history, and see when and by whom it was introduced into the Christian Church, and how it comes to be such a characteristic feature of the Church of Christ, that the bodies which are without it are the marked exceptions, and, in this respect at least, separated from the great bulk of Christendom."





CHAPTER IV.

THE OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF EPISCOPACY.

WHEN my friends met me at the Rectory, on the following day, I began the discussion by saying,

"I hope you are coming to this question without any unreasonable prejudice against it? Because, if you have already made up your minds that Episcopacy is an unscriptural invention, a mediæval perversion of the primitive simplicity of the Christian system, and that anything which I bring forward in its favour must be an ingenious distorting of facts, then there can be no use in our discussing the matter."

"Certainly, we have no prejudice against it," said Andrews; "we have Episcopacy, and unless something can be shewn against it we have no right to interfere with it. Even if we treat it as on its trial, it must be supposed innocent until its guilt is proved. That is one point in its favour. Another is that, as you explain it, there is nothing impracticable or unreasonable in it. It is good financially, and seems calculated to give the Church which retains or adopts it, a considerable amount of compact strength. Unless Scripture, or the history of the past, can show something very decidedly wrong with it, my feeling is entirely on its side."

"Certainly," said Hazlewood, "we are too good conservatives to meddle with it without cause. So now for your argument."

"Well," I said, "I hardly know where to begin with this argument. So little has sometimes been made of the statements in the Bible about Church government, that many have fancied that our Bible argument must be weak, and that we rely only upon Church history. I did think, therefore, of confining myself entirely to the argument from Scripture, and leaving you to examine history for yourselves, because I am quite sure that, if you once find the Bible upon our side, you will not much care what uninspired writers may say against us."

"Right, Uncle," said Hazlewood, "and besides this will shorten the argument and spare us ever so many quotations from dusty old volumes, which perhaps after all might give us no fair notion of their writers' real opinions."

"There is something in what Hazlewood says," answered Andrews, "yet, as we are going into the argument, we may as well complete it. It is of course quite true that none of us would put any other book above the Bible. Still the thoughts of the great writers of the past, and the history of the way in which the Bible has been generally understood and acted on, ought to help us considerably in our search for the real meaning of its words. I know that I should not like to give an opinion as to the exact meaning of an Act of Parliament, until I had seen how the most eminent jurists had been in the habit of understanding it. I should, therefore, like to hear what has been the general belief about the original constitution of the Church and its ministry, before we examine the wording of the title-deeds themselves."

"Well; but here comes another difficulty. Our first questions, as to the nature and economy and usefulness of Episcopacy, we were able to examine without the help of any books at all. Our last argument, as to the teaching of Scripture, must be settled by the examination of writings which are all bound into one small volume, and of such authority, that any intelligible

statement there will be decisive. But for this second question we may have to refer to any one of all the books, good, bad, and indifferent, which have referred to the subject of Church government during the last eighteen hundred years. How in the world are we to do this? I have not got all these books myself. I cannot afford to buy them all. If anyone were to make me a present of them, there would not be room in my house to hold them; and if I were to live to the age of Methuselah, I should hardly have time to read them all. And finally, if I had the books and the time, and did read them, I suppose I should be reduced to the lowest stage of idiotcy."

"Make selections, then, and give us quotations from a few of the best known and most reliable works."

"And who will assure you that this selection will be a fair one? or that these quotations will give you a fair impression of the books? How can you tell that my selection will not be influenced by unconscious prejudice, or even by deliberate dishonesty? No; I think I had better begin by trying to point out the generally admitted facts of history. So I shall be able to show you how the question has been narrowed down to a comparatively small space of time, and to an issue about which it may be possible to take sufficient evidence for and against. In this way I shall be able to give you a general impression of the points upon which we shall require positive evidence from Scripture and from history.

"All right," said Hazlewood, "we are quite prepared for a lecture."

"I begin," I said, "with one fact as to Episcopacy, and it is this. We have the majority of the Christendom of the present day very largely upon our side. The most trustworthy statistics make out that nine-tenths of all who profess the name of Christ have an Episcopal (or Prelatic) form of Church government. That is something, though of course only something, in its favour.

My second fact is a still more important one. It is admitted that in the fifteenth century Episcopacy was the universal rule, the recognised system of Church government over the whole of Christendom. Even the Waldenses started themselves as a sect with bishops (whom they called 'maiores') as well as presbyters and deacons; and the Albigenses, who made fierce war against sacerdotalism, retained bishops with coadjutors, whom they called elder and younger sons. Three centuries, therefore, may be dismissed at once from the controversy, as beyond all question upon our side. Episcopacy is not a modern invention.

We go back to the sixteenth century and search in vain for any trace of its institution in that age. No, even in that century, with all the controversies which then began about them, we find those three offices of bishop, priest, and deacon, treated as long established; we find them supposed by every one to have descended from very ancient times, and to be either quite as old, or nearly as old, as Christianity itself. We find in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, fierce controversies on almost every other subject; fierce disputes between different orders of monks, and between 'regulars' and 'seculars'; we find fierce denunciations of the arrogance and tyranny of individual bishops, and especially of the Bishop of Rome; but we do not find any controversy as to the antiquity of the bishop's office, or as to the necessity for ordination by bishops. We find none doubting then that, whether of Apostolic authority or not, it had at least come regularly down to them from very ancient times.

We read of none in the sixteenth century who doubted that the threefold ministry had long been an essential part of the Church system, which it would be a revolution to overturn. So deeply was this felt that the Church of England, in casting off the errors and abuses which had crept into her system, had no doubt about retaining Episcopacy as a thing which

had come down from the very source of Christianity. 'It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' times there hath been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church: bishops, priests, and deacons, which offices were evermore held in such reverent estimation that no man by his own private authority might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as were requisite for same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto.' So speaks the preface to the Ordinal in King Edward the Sixth's Prayerbook of A.D. 1549, nearly 330 years ago.

Nor was this opinion confined to the Church of England or the Church of Rome from which we separated. The Lutherans, who were unable to retain the three Orders, and were unceasingly opposed by the bishops everywhere, still admitted the antiquity and authority of the Episcopal office. They earnestly protested that they much wished to retain Episcopacy, only that the bishops were forcing their priests to reject and condemn sound doctrine, and therefore they were unable to continue their allegiance to them. 'These,' they say, 'are the reasons which hinder our priests from recognising their bishops. Thus, the cruelty of the bishops is the cause of that canonical polity being dissolved which we greatly desired to preserve. Let themselves see how they are to give account to God for dividing His Church. We wish here to testify once more that *we would willingly preserve the ecclesiastical and canonical polity*, if only the bishops would cease to exercise their cruelty upon our churches' (1).

The confession of Augsburg declared that bishops should retain all their legitimate authority, 'if only they

(1). *Apologia Confessionis*, art. vii., sec. 24 (quoted by Bishop Harold Browne).

would not urge such traditions as could not be kept with a good conscience' (2).

The Calvinists also, while rejecting those bishops who would have bound them to Rome, declared themselves ready to submit to a lawful hierarchy. Beza thought it insane to reject all Episcopacy, and wished that the Church of England might 'continue to enjoy for ever that singular bounty of God' (3).

Evidently, it must have taken several centuries of settled continuance to produce this universal conviction of its great antiquity. The Reformation, then, and its history, as well as the present fact of the existence of Episcopacy, in communions so separated from each other as the Anglican and Roman, prove that it must have been deeply rooted in the Church system long before the sixteenth century. The question is, How long before it?

Well, again, we have an universally acknowledged fact in the history of the Church, which will enable us to take another leap backwards, and feel satisfied that Episcopacy must have been firmly established long before the eleventh century. This fact is;—the well-known breach between the Churches of the East and West, the schism between the Greek Churches and the Roman Church. These Churches formally excommunicated each other in the eleventh century, and the feeling between them is so bitter at the present day, that Roman Christians would think themselves safer under the protection of Mahometans than under that of the Greek Christians; and the feelings of

(2). "Facile autem possent episcopi legitimam obedientiam retinere, si non urgerent servare traditiones quæ bona conscientia servari non possunt . . . Nunc non id agitur ut dominatio eripiat episcopis, sed hoc unum petitur, at patiantur evangelium pure doceri, et relaxent paucas quasdam observationes, quæ sine peccato servari non possunt."—*Confessio Augustana*, 1531. Art. vii. *De Potestate Ecclesiastica*.

(3). "Fruatur sane ista singulari Dei beneficentia, quæ utinam illi sit perpetua."—*Beza ad Sarav.*

Rome are as strongly opposed to Christian Russia as to Mahometan Turkey. This bitterness makes it quite impossible to suppose that either communion would have copied a modern innovation from the other. If Episcopacy had been an invention of the Greek Church after the separation, the Roman popes would not have meekly copied it, but would have anathematised it, and called the attention of the whole world to this insolent and arrogant invasion of the right of priests. If it had been introduced by the Roman authorities, or any part whatever of western Christendom, the Greek Churches would have contemptuously refused to copy it, and would have protested against it as strongly as they do against the claims of the Papacy, and against the western addition to the Nicene Creed, the famous 'Filioque' clause.

The fact, therefore, that we find at the present moment Episcopacy the settled system in every branch of both the Greek and Roman communions, is a sure proof that it must have been fully accepted by both, not only before the break came, but even before the divisions began. I say 'even before the divisions began,' because, after the first jealousies arose, if either party could have detected the other in the act of introducing the system, there would have been at once a protest and a resistance, instead of the silent and universal acceptance of it.

But, as a matter of fact, we find that there is no trace to be found of any such dispute between these two great branches of the Church upon the principle of Episcopacy. Differences there were, and fiercely fought controversies on other points, such as the day on which Easter was to be kept, and the nature of the bread to be used in the Holy Supper; differences as to the celibacy of the clergy, and the power of the priests to confirm; and these last differences remain to the present day, the Greek Church never having accepted the usage of the Church of Rome, and the Church of Rome never having conformed to the practices of the

Greek Churches. But on the question of retaining in the Christian ministry, three distinct Orders, of which the bishop alone has the power of ordaining,—on this they are at one; because it was a settled question before they separated from each other, and even before they grew jealous and suspicious of each other.

When, therefore, history tells us that the jealousies and divisions ran very high in the sixth century, we feel that Episcopacy must have had its origin before this date. However or whenever it was introduced its birth must have preceded the sixth century. In that age it was as firmly rooted as it is to-day.

A like argument may be drawn from the existence of the Nestorian and Armenian Churches, which were anathematised by the two Councils of Ephesus held in the middle of the fifth century (A.D. 431 and A.D. 451). These Churches have ever since remained separate from both the Greek and Roman communions, and they have spread to countries so remote as Tartary and China, yet they have these three offices of bishop, priest, and deacon just as we have. They trace them up to the times before their separation from the rest of Christendom. They have as deep a sense of the antiquity of these offices as the Greek and Roman Churches have. And they believe, as all of us do, that they are as old as Christianity itself, and an essential part of the system of the Church, as that was founded by our Lord and his Apostles. This ought surely to satisfy us that Episcopacy must have been firmly established before the fifth century. It must have been an already existing and recognised fact before the separation of any of these widely scattered communions, and, therefore, before the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431.

There are thus facts at present in existence, which prove that Episcopacy has been an established and characteristic feature of the Church of Christ for more than 1,400 years. All later records may be put aside. For the facts of the case, we have to examine only the

records of the first four centuries after the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 30).

And now, when we begin to examine the history of these centuries, one other step backwards is given to us by the name Aërius, which appears upon the records of the fourth century.

Aërius was born in Pontus, or Armenia, about A.D. 330; and, between A.D. 360 and A.D. 370, he formed a strong friendship with Eustathius, who was a monk in the same convent with himself. Unfortunately, these two friends became candidates for the same office, the bishopric of Sebaste, and Eustathius was elected. He tried to soften the disappointment to Aërius by ordaining him presbyter, and putting him in charge of an establishment for the entertainment of strangers. Yet it is supposed that Aërius never forgave him his success, for, shortly afterwards, he accused the bishop of avarice and misappropriation of the funds for the poor. This, of course, led to an open breach, and Aërius shortly afterwards gave up his hospital, left the Church altogether, and formed a sect which protested against Episcopacy, against prayers for the dead, and against the mode of keeping Easter. The nature of his protest against Episcopacy is very instructive as to the estimation in which this system was then held by the Church. 'He maintained,' says Schlegel, 'that in the times of the Apostles there was no difference between a bishop and a presbyter. . . . This he solidly proved from passages in Paul. . . . He was not disposed to abolish the human rights of bishops, but only to rescue the presbyters from episcopal oppression in the exercise of their legitimate functions' (4).

This is the account of a Lutheran, and (therefore) Presbyterian historian, the friend and translator of Mosheim; and it certainly proves that in the fourth century Episcopacy was so firmly established, so universally believed to have a Divine authority, that

(4). Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.*, vol. i., pt. ii., ch. 3, note.

anyone who asserted the original equality of bishops and presbyters, and tried to act upon this assertion, found the whole Church opposed to him, himself treated as a heretic, and his followers a sect. If, then, Episcopacy was the human invention which Aërius thought it was, it must have been invented before his day, and therefore within three hundred years of the Day of Pentecost.

Yet even this is taking a low ground, because the most learned and candid of those who object to Episcopacy grant us much more than this. They grant that it was established everywhere before the end of the second century. Thus Blondel admits that Episcopacy must have been introduced before Tertulian wrote his book on baptism, the date of which he fixes as A.D. 197, and he says it was everywhere admitted before the end of the second age or century.

Nor does he venture to state that a system of ministerial equality immediately preceded it, but a permitted presidency which he thinks was changed into an authoritative Episcopacy, in Jerusalem, about A.D. 153; and in Rome, about A.D. 140⁽⁵⁾.

Salmasius differs from Blondel as to the form of Church government which he thinks preceded the Episcopal, but he makes an admission which brings us down to the same date. He says:—‘About the beginning or middle of the second age a first singular Episcopacy—*i.e.*, of one individual presiding over presbyters—was introduced’⁽⁶⁾. Du Moulin makes this strong admission:—‘I am not so fastidiously presumptuous as to oppose myself to all antiquity, and reject as faulty and wicked a thing which was received into the Church from the age succeeding the Apostolic’⁽⁷⁾. Professor Campbell in his lectures on Ecclesiastical History says,—‘*Before the middle of the*

(5). Blondel’s *Apol. pro. sent. Hieron. de Episcopis et Presbyteris*, pp. 176, 358.

(6). Walo. Messal. cap. iv. p. 253 (quoted by Boyd).

(7). *Epis. ad Winton*, p. 173.

second century a subordination of the ecclesiastical polity began to obtain very generally throughout the Christian world, every single Church or Congregation having a plurality of presbyters who, as well as the deacons, were all under the superintendence of one pastor or bishop' (8).

Mosheim in his history of the second century goes further still, for he says:—'The form of Church government, *which began to exist in the preceding century* (that is, before A.D. 100) was in this (the second century) more industriously established and conformed in all its parts. One president, or bishop, presided over each Church. He was created by the common suffrage of the whole people, with the presbyters for his council, whose number was not fixed; he watched over the interests of religion, assigned to each presbyter his station. Subject to both bishops and presbyters were the servants or deacons' (9).

This, remember, is the admission of a Presbyterian, for whom the facts of history were so strong that he admitted, not only that it was established in the second century, but also that it had commenced in the first century, and therefore during the life-time of the Apostles. When he comes to the history of the third century, he says: 'The form of ecclesiastical government, which had been already adopted, was more confirmed and strengthened, both as regards individual churches and the whole society of Christians. He must be ignorant of the history and movements of this age, who can deny that a person, bearing the title of bishop, presided over each Church in the larger cities, and managed its public concerns with some degree of authority; yet having the presbyters for his council, and taking the voice of the whole people on subjects of any moment' (10).

(8). *Lectures on Eccl. Hist.* (quoted by Boyd).

(9). Mosheim's *Eccl. Hist.*, vol. i., bk. i., cent. ii., pt. i., ch. 2.

(10). *Ibid.*, vol. i., cent. iii., pt. ii., ch. 2.

Finally, the Presbyterian divines, in their reply to King Charles in the Isle of Wight Conference, made this admission :—‘ We grant that, *not long after the Apostles’ times*, bishops in some superiority to presbyters, are, by the writers of those times, reported to have been in the Church.’ (11).

The language of these quotations shews that their authors all deny the Divine or Apostolic origin of Episcopacy, and all suggest that it was a human invention. Yet, even in their attempts to prove this, they are obliged to confess that it has been established in the Church ever since the middle, or at least the end, of the second century. By common confession, then, we have seventeen hundred years’ possession to plead in defence of these Orders which men are now attempting to disparage. And the historical period which we have to examine has grown very small indeed. If Episcopacy did not spring into existence between the years A.D. 90 and the year A.D. 160, it must have come down to us from the days in which the Apostles lived. And if it has come down to us as the form of Church government which existed in the life-time of the Apostles, we may rest assured either that the Church was originally started with it, or else that the Apostles established, or sanctioned, or at least allowed it.

Our case, then, is proved, unless it can be shewn against us that an opposite system prevailed before A.D. 90, and that Episcopacy was either gradually insinuated, or violently forced upon the Church during the sixty or seventy years which immediately succeeded upon the deaths of the Apostles. Presbyterian writers usually take this gradual or violent revolution for granted, and act as if the onus lay upon us to disprove it. But evidently it is the thing to be proved by them; for it is not in itself such a probable thing that it ought to be supposed without evidence. Indeed, I feel it to be an ecclesiastical revolution so unnatural, so wildly

(11). First Answer, Oct. 3, p. 11.

improbable, that I could not believe it, unless I had clear and unmistakeable evidence of the manner and time and place in which this supernatural change did actually take place.

For, see to what a state the opponent of Episcopacy is now reduced. He admits that it is the system of Church government which prevailed everywhere at the time of the Reformation, and that it was at that time looked upon as a characteristic feature of the Christian Church. He admits also that our present Orders of bishop, priest, and deacon have been handed down from generation to generation for the last seventeen hundred years. Yet he rejects them; he will have none of them; because, he says, they are human inventions which have destroyed the original and divine constitution of the Church.

We ask him to tell us when they were invented, where they were invented, and what proof he has of their invention? He admits that the only time in which they could have been so invented was that little bit of time, which is farthest from us, about which we know least, and can do little more than guess what did or did not happen in it. Of all the ages about which we have full, clear evidence we can prove that there was no such revolution in the Church then. The only century about which we have any dim and uncertain tidings, is the only one about which he makes confident assertions. I say that that in itself is a most suspicious circumstance.

Well, now, let us think the matter over. Is it at all probable that such a revolution could have taken place in the first half of the second century?

If it did take place—if the original constitution of the Church was indeed so entirely and mischievously altered, it must have been altered either suddenly and violently, or else secretly, stealthily, and gradually.

If the change came *gradually*, it must have crept in slowly; and if it crept in slowly, so slowly as to have escaped notice, it must have begun in the

Apostles' times, in order to have rooted itself everywhere, from Spain in the West, to Egypt in the East. before the year A.D. 150, not sixty years after S. John's death, and not ninety years after the Book of the Acts of the Apostles was written.

How, then, can we imagine that the Apostles (who were observant enough of other innovations and of corruptions of their customs and teachings) were blind to the beginning of this and silent about its growth, if it was indeed the evil thing which our Presbyterian friends believe it to be, or if it was destructive of the ministerial equality which the Lord desired, and they themselves established?

Yet, that Episcopacy should have *suddenly* established itself everywhere is a thing still more incredible, because it would have been a revolution. There was at that time no power, such as a Christian emperor for example, which could have planned or forced this revolution upon the Church with authority. Nor were there such means of secret correspondence at that time between single clergy, as could have made a secret clerical conspiracy of widely separated individuals against their fellows a possible thing. One here or there might possibly have effected such a change for himself in a particular district or group of churches. But that the whole principle of ministerial equality, handed down to them (as it is supposed) with Divine authority from our Lord himself, could have been overturned everywhere at once, without a protest, without, as far as we can discover, a word of remonstrance or expression of surprise from those whose rights were being destroyed, this is surely a most improbable, a most incredible thing.

Can any one seriously believe—First, that in every Church throughout the whole Roman world, there was invariably found one presbyter, so peculiarly gifted that he was able to persuade all his fellow presbyters, that he had a right to take from them their former power of ordaining, and a right to exercise

authority over them? Secondly, that never until the days of Aërius was there in any one Church anywhere a second presbyter, who had the spirit to question this unprincipled usurpation; and Thirdly, that this wrongful usurpation succeeded so perfectly that the deluded presbyters throughout the whole world were fully convinced that they never had possessed the powers which the Apostles had given them, implicitly believed that these usurpers had always ruled, and remained in this delusion for fourteen hundred years, and that even then it was only discovered to be a delusion by those whose interest it was to think it one?

The man who can believe this must have a very strangely constituted mind.

But further, you must remember who those men were that held Episcopal power in the beginning of the second century, since they, if any, must be the men who thus overturned the Divine constitution of the Church for their own ends. Men like Clement, Polycarp, and Ireneus! men whose saintliness and self-sacrifice have left an undying impression upon the Church! men whose letters show so little trace of such ambition, that they are sometimes paraded before us by our opponents, as proofs that their writers never thought of such ranks or distinctions! And for what are these men supposed to have been so greedy? For a prominence which, in those days of poverty and affliction, brought no wealth, but only earlier and fiercer persecutions. That, in the later days of the Church's prosperity, men pushed and struggled for the high and luxurious places in the Church we can easily believe. But that in those first years, so soon after the holy Apostles had left the Church of Christ to her lonely fight against all the world's hatred, that then these saintly martyrs should have grasped so greedily at such perilous offices, and overturned the system established by the Apostles whose disciples they loved to proclaim themselves, and in direct violation of the Gospel spirit in which

they were content to die,—this is surely most incredible.”

“It does sound strange as you put it,” said Andrews, “but I should like to have an outline, at least, of the historical evidence, by which they think they can prove that this strange revolution did actually take place.”

“They have no historical evidence.”

“None? You do not mean absolutely none. You mean none that you think sufficiently strong.”

“I do mean absolutely none. Their only attempt at argument is their assertion that we cannot prove for certain that it did not take place. They declare that the writings, which have come down to us from the first century and the beginning of the second, are so few, and their references to the three Orders so indistinct, or else their genuineness so uncertain, that there is not sufficient proof in them that the three Orders were then existing in the ministry, and, therefore, they are free to believe that they did not exist, or at least were unauthorised.”

“Do you really mean to tell us that the only proof they offer in support of their strange theory is the silence of the writings of the times?”

“I do, indeed. It is the literal fact. Many of their controversial writings are full, I know, of statements that this revolution in the government of the Church did take place. But those statements have no positive historical evidence to rest upon; they are only inferences, from this one not mentioning a bishop in this city, and that one seeming to act independently in that city. They appeal, indeed, to the writings of certain learned men, who individually held this opinion of theirs; but those men all lived centuries after the time about which they hazarded these opinions, and their statements are only conjectures and thoughts. The only *evidence* ever brought forward on their side against the threefold ministry is that, if its three offices existed in the beginning of the second century, there would have been more full and undoubted

assertions of their existence than have yet been discovered."

"Nay; but you may argue on the other side from that silence, always supposing that there is a silence. You may say, If these offices were the ordinary undisputed things which we suppose them to have been, they would have been less likely to have been mentioned than if they were the novelties our opponents think they were."

"Right, and a proof of it is here. You see that large octavo volume published in the year 1864, 'Bridges on the Christian Ministry.' There is not one hint in that book that there are any orders or degrees at all in the ministry about which it is written. The famous New Zealander, who is to sit upon the ruins of London Bridge, may perhaps argue from this silence (if he discovers it) that there were no such divisions in the ministry of which the writer treated. But, unfortunately, you and I see that the author was the Rev. C. Bridges, rector of Melcombe, near Dorset, who dedicated his work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and who must have been admitted by a bishop's hands—first to the order of deacon, and then to that of priest. A similar inference, from the silence of the writings which have come down to us from the beginning of the second century, may be just as absurd as this would have been.

And again, if silence about the three orders in the ministry is to be counted as an argument against the existence of those orders, then surely we may count the silence of all history as an argument against this supposed revolution on which Presbyterians are relying. On their own principles they ought to allow that what passed so quietly through, and came so quietly out of those fifty years, is likely to have been very much the same as that which went quietly into them, namely, the original constitution of the Church."

"There is another point which has occurred to me," said Andrews. "If there were everywhere men of

such extraordinary gifts and personal ambition, as to have so soon succeeded in revolutionising the divinely-appointed constitution of the Church, they must have been men of mark ; their writings are pretty sure to stand clearly out above the writings of the time, and their names and works are pretty sure to have survived. Now, what writings have come down to us from the end of the first century and the beginning of the second ? ”

“ Only the writings of Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr ; for the works bearing the names of Barnabas and Hermas are generally thought not to have been the productions of the persons named in the New Testament. Only one of the two epistles attributed to Clement is now believed to be his, and there are fierce controversies over the letters of Ignatius. The majority of the learned accept seven of them as genuine, but others only three, and now a few are denouncing even these three as forgeries. If Ignatius’ seven letters are admitted to be genuine, they do bring before us a man of great strength of purpose, and with a strong desire to uphold the Episcopal office. But, at the same time, they give us absolute proof of the authority and supremacy of the bishop over the presbyters and deacons. If we are to take only those writings which all our opponents accept, they bring only three individuals distinctly before us, Clement, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr. And, most unfortunately for the Presbyterian theory, the only one of these who shews real strength of purpose and ardent temperament is the only one of them who never exercised it in the way they describe. The only learned divine of the first half of the second century was Justin Martyr, who never was, and never was supposed to be, a bishop. The writings of the other two, Clement and Polycarp, shew only a gentle, loveable, Christian spirit, without a trace of the characteristics which would have tempted, or enabled them to promote such an irreverent revolution.

Indeed, no one has ever ventured to charge either of them with this. On the contrary, they try to shew that their writings do not mention the Episcopal office in the way in which we should have expected them to mention it, *if it was in existence*. I think they might allow us to add, that neither do they mention it in the way in which we should have expected them to mention it, *if they were trying to force it upon the Church*. It is most absurd for men to insist that the bishops of the second century were men who were upsetting the Divinely-appointed equality of all ministers; and, at the same time, to insist that those same bishops knew nothing about the distinctions which they were introducing."

"I see," said Hazlewood; "their theory"—

"Wait a minute," interrupted Andrews, "It has just struck me that, in your whole exposure of the improbability that this revolution took place, you have been taking for granted that this change was supposed to be an evil thing, originated by an evil motive. May not the originators of the change have been actuated by a pious wish to make the Church more organised against the assaults of her enemies?"

"Quite possible," I answered, "and many of our own advocates have thought that this was the way in which Episcopacy was introduced. But still the question comes, Were these men right or wrong in thinking this change an improvement? If you say they were right, then you say it was an improvement upon the original constitution of the Church; one which our Lord and His Apostles would have approved. If so, you are an Episcopalian. But then you must allow that our Lord, at least, must have foreseen this improvement. You cannot think that He formed so poorly the Church which he intended to last for ever, that it needed a radical alteration before it had lasted a single century.

In the original constitution of the Jewish Church, there were provisions made for a change in it, from a

theocracy to an hereditary monarchy, although that change was not to be effected for centuries. You can hardly doubt that our Lord would have had a similar provision in the constitution of His new Church for the beneficial change, which was to be introduced so very soon after the deaths of His Apostles. And what is this but saying, that the principle of the Episcopal system was contained in the Divine constitution of the Church, or, at least, that the system which we have inherited from primitive times is a healthy and proper development of the original constitution of the ministry? This would not at all suit our Presbyterian friends, for it would be giving up the whole question. It would mean that our system was in accordance with the will of God, and, therefore, by all means, to be retained. Now, although there are those in Germany and elsewhere, who admit this, and who are without Episcopacy only because they could not retain it without retaining also many things which they felt to be disastrous and evil ; this is not at all the ground which the Presbyterians of this country are taking now. No ; their whole position rests on this—that prelacy is in itself an evil ; that the change which introduced it was a wrong and revolutionary and mischievous change, one which no motives and no lapse of time can ever sanction.

Yet, if they can suppose that, within fifty years of the death of the beloved disciple, the whole Church (in which the Spirit of the living God is ever working) had unanimously and without question accepted such an unauthorised and mischievous change ; and that our Lord and His Apostles had not foresight enough to warn the Church against it, then I must say they have a most unworthy idea of the Person of the Son of God, and a most imperfect conception of His guiding of the Church, which He purchased with His own blood, and which He endowed with the Holy Ghost in order to lead them into all the truth."

"I see, now," said Andrews. "However we take it,

their case requires us to assume the existence of a more unnatural revolution than any of which the world has yet heard."

"It does. Suppose Frank Hazlewood here saw his whole regiment drawn out in line, and observed that in the dim distance his colonel was handing something to the man at the far end, and that the something was coming down to him along the line, handed from man to man. Suppose that, as soon as it came within eyesight, he saw it was a rifle, and that the nearest man handed it over to him, saying it was sent to him by his colonel, would he not be justified in saying that that very rifle had come to him from his colonel?"

Would he listen to a sceptic, who insisted that he was so sure the colonel intended him to use a musket, that a trick must have been played upon him; the second or third man who pretended to pass it on, must have cleverly changed it, and substituted this rifle? Would he think this sceptic justified, because neither of them could prove that either the colonel or the soldiers nearest him distinctly called the thing a rifle?"

"Absurd," said Hazlewood, "The rifle is much the handiest for a soldier, and therefore much more likely to have been selected by the colonel. If he was handing it to men with eyes, there was no need to name it, and no private would have dared to attempt such a trick without an overpowering motive, and unless he was a long way off the colonel, and then he would have been within sight of me. Then, even if he did try, he could not change it without our noticing some unusual movement, nor, indeed, without some of his comrades detecting him, unless the whole regiment was in a state of mutiny."

"Then I think we may take for granted that the system, which has been handed so regularly down to us from the Apostles' times, must have been the original gift of Christ. The entire Church is not likely to have grown so soon blind, or fallen into a

state of mutiny so early in her history.

Indeed, it is strange that those who reject the Church's constitution, which has certainly come to us from the second century, can accept the Scriptures of the New Testament. Our chief argument for both the New Testament canon, and also the Church's organisation, is this: That at the earliest date at which we catch a distinct view of the Christian Church, we find her with this organisation, and with these writings, both of which she was then treating as gifts from her Lord and His Apostles, and to both of which she appealed as of supreme authority. This argument is immeasurably strengthened by the fact that we can imagine no natural means by which either of these two things could have been imposed upon the entire Church, if they were not what she believed them to be.

We may, therefore, come to our examination of these New Testament writings with a strong conviction, that we are likely to find a correspondence between their statements and that organised system of the Church which we find watching over them and guarding them with reverent care."



Second Part.



THE ARGUMENT FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.



CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

MY friends found the discussion recorded in the last chapter quite long enough for the day, and we postponed the examination of the Bible argument until the following Wednesday.

When we again found ourselves round the study table, we proceeded to examine Scripture for arguments as to the system and constitution with which the Church was first started.

My first argument was, that there must always have been some system, some constitution in the Church.

"I think," I said, "we are all agreed that a society is not a society at all, but a mere rabble, unless it has some arrangement for admitting members, keeping these members together, and conducting its business. And I think we are agreed also, that such arrangements cannot be maintained without officials of some kind. For a time, of course, the several peasants that felt drawn to Jesus of Nazareth were only so many disciples of His. But, when once they were drawn together as a company, or joined in any united action, there must have been some mutual understanding among them; there must have been some system of working together—one leading and another following—whether that system was openly explained or silently accepted, whether it was given by their Master, or only invented by themselves. I ask you to keep this clearly before your mind; because there is a very unreasonable

impression abroad, that our Lord Jesus left only a rabble behind Him, who might or might not have worked together systematically, and that His disciples have remained a rabble ever since; an impression that none of His disciples are bound to one another at all, but only to Him; and that any number of them are at any moment at liberty to form themselves into a new society on a new plan, ignoring everything which has been arranged or acquiesced in since the Day of Pentecost."

"In fact," said Andrews, "you object to the notion that the Christian Church means only a disorderly crowd of strongly-impressed individuals, who have an unlimited license to form themselves into kaleidoscope combinations, each as good as the other, and ever so much better."

"Exactly. Now, what I want you to feel is this: that, even if our Lord can be proved to have done nothing else for His disciples, but only stamped the memory of his own words and works on each heart separately, and then left them to act independently of each other, as each man's heart disposed him; even in that case they would have been compelled for very existence, to form themselves at once into a society, with arrangements for united action and teaching.

They must even in that case, have started as a society more or less organised. They must even so have had an original constitution of some kind, an original form of Church government, Church discipline, and Church worship, however rough, or rude, or indistinct that form or system may have been. And, once such system was formed and accepted, every member of the consenting multitude must have been bound to respect it."

"True; but this first system or constitution may have been one that was intended only for the first start, suited only to the peculiar circumstances of the infant Church, and it may have been neither intended nor fitted to last for ever."

“Quite so. What I insist on now is only this: that you have no right whatever to suppose that the Church began without a system, and only gradually invented one for herself. The Christian Church may, perhaps, have improved or corrupted her original constitution; but some constitution, some system or other, she must have had from the very first, whether or not we are able to discover it.”

“I grant you that, and I grant you also that, if we can discover what that first system was, and that it was even tolerated by our Lord, it will have a tremendous claim upon our reverent affection; and that, if it seems to be at all workable under our present circumstances, we certainly ought to prefer it to any other. But, if it can be proved to be the system which has come down to us through all these centuries, I can conceive of nothing but a distinct command of God which could justify us in giving it up.”

“Very well, then. We are agreed that the Church of Christ must have had some original constitution, and we wish to search the Bible to see whether we are told there what that constitution was.

That is the first step in my argument. My second is this. Suppose the Bible says nothing, or nothing quite decisive upon the subject, then our opponents' case breaks down. We have traced the constitution of the Christian ministry as we have it now, back to the middle of the second century. We have found it in quiet and full possession of the entire field of Christendom, within sixty years of the death of the last Apostle. If there is no *proof* that an opposite system preceded it, the presumption is that none did precede it. In the silence of all history, our threefold system claims in right of possession. It must be taken as the original system, or the natural and orderly development of the original system.”

“Then your whole argument from Scripture comes to this, that there is no argument in Scripture at all?”

“It does not. I am not saying, mind you, that

Scripture is silent, for I do not think it is. But I want to gain the full weight for everything which Scripture does say upon our side. To secure this, I shew you that, *if our view is right*, there was no necessity that Scripture should say anything. Silence alone would have been quite enough to have kept any reverent Christians from disturbing that constitution of the Church which they found actually existing. If, therefore, the God of Holy Scripture knew that a different system from what He desired would be so soon and so successfully introduced, we should expect that He would have expressed somewhere very clearly what the original and right constitution was. So, if Scripture is found to be absolutely silent upon the subject, or if all the evidence from Scripture seems incomplete and inconclusive, too weak to be urged on either side, then this silence is sufficient for us, but disastrous for our opponents. It would be very much what we might have expected if an orderly system of Church government was passing regularly down to the next generation along with Scripture; and it would more than justify every Christian of that next generation in accepting the ministry that he found established and in charge of these very Scriptures.

Silence, then, being sufficient for us, any one hint that breaks the silence in our favour, any little circumstance that seems to harmonise with Episcopacy rather than any other system, becomes a gratuitous strengthening of our case, a positive argument upon our side, beyond all that we could have calculated upon."

"Quite true; yet, at the same time, you must not forget that, if there is anything unreasonable or unchristian in the principles of your system, this would not only weaken but perhaps destroy all the impressions in its favour that you may draw from history or from the silence of Scripture."

"Certainly; and for this reason I am very glad that we have had already our three discussions about

the practical usefulness of the Prelatic (or Episcopal) system. For now you have admitted that there is nothing unreasonable or impracticable in it."

"We have. But your arguments then were drawn only from rules of human expediency, and went to shew only that Episcopacy seems reasonable to *us*. It is quite conceivable that, though reasonable and useful in our eyes, it may not be so in the thoughts of the Almighty. He, who can see so much deeper than we, may know that the union and order which seem so attractive so us, are actually injurious to His Church."

"Very true. That determines me on the point with which to begin. Let us turn to the Old Testament and try whether we can find any symptom of this principle of ranks and orders and degrees in the ministry of the Jewish Church."

"By the way, Rector, who were the first ministers of religion?"

"The fathers, or heads, of the several families. The chief, or patriarch, of each tribe, of course, took the lead in worship as in all other tribal action. Each father acted as priest in his own family, and all such priests were, of course, on a common level. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all offered their own family sacrifices by a natural right. Until there was an intercourse and union and co-operation of families, the question, whether or not there should be ranks and degrees among such offerers of worship, could never rise.

But, in the very first place in which we find a record of a meeting between offerers of worship that were not related to each other as members of the same family, there we find at once a subordination of one priest to another, and so the first trace of prelacy or inequality. Abram is recorded to have bowed down to Melchisedec for his blessing, and to have paid tithes to him as to a priest of a higher order than himself. I need not remind you how this distinction between their orders is pressed by the author of the Epistle to the

Hebrews⁽¹⁾. The mere words of the narrative prove that (at least in this instance) God Himself sanctioned the principle of an inequality between the positions of those whom He accepted as His priests.

But many years after this the time came when the families of Israel were bound together into one Church, with a common government and common worship. At once the ministry of God for the whole nation was moulded by God's own authority into a regular gradation of ranks. *First* stood the one High Priest who had powers and duties that none shared with him. Under him were the Priests as a *second* order, and under them the Levites as a *third*. Evidently, beyond all doubt, the existence of unequal ranks in a sacred ministry is not in itself an evil, or a thing essentially displeasing to God. You see that He Himself at the very earliest opportunity introduced this inequality (and, indeed, the very threefold arrangement for which I am arguing) into the Jewish Church ⁽²⁾."

"Do you claim, then, that your three orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon are copied or derived from the ancient orders of High Priest, Priest, and Levite?"

"I do not think it necessary to claim this, although it has been claimed by writers in every age. Clement, in the first century, and Jerome, in the fifth, apply the ancient titles to the orders in the Christian ministry, without a suspicion, apparently, that anyone will be perplexed by them ⁽³⁾.

Through Isaiah, God promised that in the coming dispensation He would take some of the Gentiles 'for Priests and for Levites'; and through Malachi He promised that 'in every place incense and a pure offering' (which could only be presented by the priesthood) 'should be offered unto His name among

(1). Gen. xiv. 18-21. Heb. vi. 4-8.

(2). Num. xvi. 8-11.

(3). See chap. xii. pp. 174, 175.

the Gentiles' (4). These and other similar passages have been thought to point to a certain continuity between the ministry of the Jewish Church and the ministry of the Christian Church, as if the latter was to be a development of the former. There are many writers, therefore, who will argue with great force that, the Jewish ministry having had three orders, the Christian ministry may be expected to have the same. But I do not need to lay weight on this. I call your attention to the Jewish priesthood simply and solely in order to shew that the principle of prelacy is not in itself unscriptural, or out of harmony with the mind of God. It was distinctly and authoritatively introduced by God Himself in the older dispensation, out of which the Christian dispensation took its rise."

"I see ; you are still at your introduction, meeting the objections which might create a prejudice against your case."

"I am, and observe, I have more than this one example of our principle in the older dispensation. If you turn to the eighteenth chapter of the Book of Exodus you will find that the Judges of Israel were also arranged in ranks and gradations, one above the other,—'judges of tens, judges of fifties, judges of hundreds, judges of thousands,'—with Moses as a final judge of appeal" (5).

"Yes ; but I see that this was a suggestion from Jethro, and only tolerated by God."

"True ; yet it was tolerated, and therefore not displeasing to Him, or an evil in itself. A third example deserves more particular attention. It is that of the leadership of the people. How was the army of Israel organised for God's campaign ? How were the hosts of God's people officered and led out to battle ? Who helped Moses in the care and guidance of so many thousands marching to the promised land ?

(4). "And I will also take of them for Priests and for Levites, saith the LORD." (Isa. lxi. 21). Also Mal. i. 11.

(5). Exod. xviii. 25.

Turn to the Book of Numbers. You find that there were three distinct ranks among the officers, whatever relation these had or had not towards each other. Everywhere we find Moses, the lawgiver, invested with a rank and authority supreme above all others. He not only superintended all lower exercise of authority, but all his assistants' derived their official rank from his hands, or at least with his co-operation ; and he had at least two distinct ranks of officers under him. Read the first chapter. There you find God telling Moses to choose out 'a man out of every tribe, every one head of the house of his fathers.' Their names were given to him, and we are told, 'These were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel'(6). They officered the people(7), represented them in offering to God(8), led them in their marches(9), and represented each his own tribe in council and elsewhere(10). This was, therefore, a second rank of officials under the first (or chief) leader. But these proved to be insufficient. In the eleventh chapter we find Moses, broken down with the burden and care of all the people, feeling as if the assistance of the twelve princes was almost nothing to him, and crying out in despair to God, 'I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if

(6). Num. i. 4-19.

(7). chap. i. 44.

(8). chap. vii. 2, 10, 11.

(9). chap. x. 13-28.

(10). "And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, Phinehas, son of Eleazar the priest, And with him ten princes of each chief house, a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel, and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel." (Josh. xxii., 13, 14). That this office did not disappear even through the captivity, is shewn in Ezra, where we read that Cyrus king of Persia gave the sacred vessels "unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah."—Ezra i. 8.

Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in Thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness. And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them unto the Tabernacle of the congregation that they may stand there with thee ; and I will come down and talk with thee there. And I will take of the spirit which is upon thee and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone' ⁽¹¹⁾. Accordingly we read (a little lower down), that 'the Lord came down in a cloud and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders ; and it came to pass that when the spirit rested upon them they prophesied and did not cease' ⁽¹²⁾.

There, once more, we have, by Divine appointment, three distinct ranks of officers leading and caring for the people of God, viz.—First, Moses, the Lawgiver ; Secondly, the Twelve Princes ruling the twelve tribes under Moses ; and Thirdly, the Seventy Elders appointed afterwards to assist Moses. Jerome, a writer that ought not to be suspected of undue partiality to Episcopacy, says that he thinks there was a distinction between the offices of the Prince and the Elder, like that which now exists between the offices of the Bishop and the Presbyter ⁽¹³⁾.

Whether you and I agree with him in this or not, at least we ought not to say that the principle of unequal ranks and degrees of office, which is the principle of the prelatic system, is alien to the mind of God."

"It has struck me as a curious coincidence that in two out of these three cases you have the number

(11). Num. xi. 14-18.

(12). chap. xi. 25.

(13). "Inter Senes autem et Principes hoc fuisse reor in veteri populo quod nunc est inter Presbyteros et Episcopos."—*Hieronym. opp. omnia.*, iv. 58.

Three, for which you contend in the Christian ministry. Do you think this of any importance?"

"Only to this extent. Numbers are suggestive, and are almost always significant in Scripture. Three is a number usually associated with things purely divine. Such other numbers as four and ten, or the half of ten, are used in connection with things of the world. When God comes into covenant with the world, and when heaven and earth are joined together, we find the sacred 'three' joined with the world's 'four' (either as seven or twelve), to mark symbols of the Church and covenanted people of God. So I am not surprised to find the Divine 'Three' marking the Divinely appointed ministry about holy things, both in the Jewish and Christian dispensations.

Nor am I surprised at finding the three ranks of One, Twelve, and Seventy arranged for the leadership of the people of God; while the judges over secular matters were apparently divided into Five distinct ranks, arranged by tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands, with Moses as their chief.

But at present all I want to press upon you is only this: That the Bible has not yet taught us to shrink from a subordination of offices, either in civil or ecclesiastical affairs, and that this very principle which we should ourselves be inclined to adopt in order to bind a society into one incorporated whole, God Almighty has honoured with his approval, in that he bound His people so together. Judges, Officers, and Priests, all had their graduated scale of ranks, one above the other. If you had found the principle confined to the judicial staff, you might have said that this was no parallel for us, because they were only over secular and worldly business. If you had found it only in the priesthood, you might have said it was no precedent for us, because the whole priesthood is now absorbed in the one office of our one High Priest, who, because 'He ever liveth to make intercession,' needs neither assistant nor successor. But now you see that the

principle was not confined to these. You see it pervading every relation of life—civil, military, and religious; and this either by Divine appointment, or with Divine approval.”

“All this sounds reasonable enough, Uncle, but I must say that you have not yet given us the Bible proof of Episcopacy for which we met.”

“No; he has not come to that yet. He is still only preparing the way, and preparing it so elaborately that I feel tempted to make this insinuation. Your direct argument from the New Testament must be very weak, if you need all this long preparation beforehand, from financial considerations, political economy, history, and the Old Testament.”

“I do not think my direct argument is at all weak. But I want you to see its full strength. And indeed I do think there is something absurdly unreasonable in such an insinuation from you. You have started one preliminary objection after another; First, that Episcopacy was an expensive luxury; then that it was unreasonable and cumbrous; and then, that perhaps it might be contrary to the will of God. I have met each of these objections as you brought them, and now you tell me my case must be very weak, because I have met them. What would you have said if I had evaded them?”

But I have done at last with my introduction. I ask you now to turn with me to the New Testament, and see what it says about the constitution and ministry that our Lord gave to His own Church.”





CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH UNDER THE PERSONAL MINISTRY OF OUR LORD.

I OPENED the next stage of our discussion as follows :—

“I have spoken about the necessity for system, and therefore for organisation, and therefore for officials in every society. I have spoken about the gain in the way of strength and cohesion from a gradation of ranks, such as we have in our armies. Yet you will hardly expect to find such system or organisation within the company of the disciples before the Day of Pentecost. It was hardly the time for it yet. There was hardly the need for it yet. Their company was so small. The personal presence of their Divine Lord might surely have been a sufficient centre and source of union for so small a company, without assistance from any regularly organised staff of officers.

Yet, although we could hardly have expected to find any organisation at all among them, much less any trace of our own threefold system, during those first three years, the remarkable thing is that we do find already the germ and seed of it; we do find its principle already established among them, and that by our Lord's own authority. Now this seems to me to give an irresistible impression in favour, not only of the regular organisation of the Church as a thing of divine institution, but also of ranks and degrees

within the ministry, since we find such established by our Lord before there was apparent need for it."

"Is this the case? Can you shew us chapter and verse for it?"

"I can. Open your New Testaments and look through the four Gospels. You will find that the conception of His disciples as an organised company, a people, a brotherhood, a society, a kingdom, underlies all our Lord's instructions to them. I do not say that you will find proofs that His disciples were already formed into a carefully organised society, or that all their action was what we call 'corporate' action. But I do say that our Lord is found even then preparing them for such corporate action, and laying down already the foundations of their future organisation. Their staff of officers, their leaders, were already named and authorised⁽¹⁾. Their Lord took these officers, not as individual disciples, but as representatives of His whole Church⁽²⁾, who were to be considered as lasting unto the end of the world⁽³⁾, holders of offices which would continue, though individuals died or became traitors⁽⁴⁾. He gave these officers authority to rule His kingdom⁽⁵⁾. To one of them (Simon Peter) He

(1). Matt. x. 1, 5, 7, 16, 40; Mark iii. 13, 14; Luke vi. 13; ix. 1, 2.

(2). "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world. . . . I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me. . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word."—John xvii. 6, 9, 20.

(3). I am with you alway, unto the end of the world.—Matt. xxviii. 20.

(4). "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28). "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." (John vi. 70). Compare with these S. Peter's commentary upon the fall of Judas from his office, "His bishopric let another take. . . . Wherefore of these men. . . . *must* one be ordained to be a witness with us. And the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.—Acts i. 20-26.

(5). "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; That ye may eat and drink in My king-

gave authority to throw open the gates for the admission of members into the Society which he meant to build. And he gave to this same official, as afterwards to the whole brotherhood, authority to exercise discipline over the individual members. As Head and President of this society, he promised to take a special interest in all their meetings, and to ratify up in heaven all that should be duly done by them upon earth, in the way of such discipline ⁽⁶⁾. Addressing this staff of officials whom He had Himself appointed, and addressing them as representatives of the whole company of His disciples, He gave them before His ascension a world-wide work, which should occupy them, generation after generation, as long as the world should last. He charged them to win the world to join their brotherhood, and gave them two prescribed ceremonies; one for admitting new members, and one for preserving such in membership, and keeping up their interest in Him, His society, and His work ⁽⁷⁾.

Read the last verses of the Gospel according to S. Mathew, and you cannot fail to see that those whom He so addressed were incorporated into a divine society as by a royal charter. For you have

dom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 29, 30.

(6). "I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: And whatsoever *thou* shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; And whatsoever *thou* shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 18, 19). "And if he shall neglect to hear them" (*i.e.* selected individuals) "tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever *ye* shall loose in earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 17, 18). Compare S. John (xx. 19-24) again. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of you."—Matt. xiii. 20.

(7). Matt. xxviii. 16-20; and S. Luke. "This do in remembrance of Me."—Luke xxii. 19.

there—(1.) The Preamble, containing the style and title of the Founder ; (2.) The work for which the Society was founded and endowed ; and (3.) Finally, their endowment in perpetuity with that which would ensure the society's success. Here is the passage :—
 'Then the eleven disciples (*i.e.*, the Apostles) went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying :

1. 'ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH.'
2. 'Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations,
 [by] (*a*) baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
 (*b*) teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you :
3. AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD. Amen.'

Now, if this was not a regularly organised society, I really do not know what an organised society is. That, then, is my first point ; That our Lord did really organise His disciples into a society, with a staff of officers, a plan for corporate work, and a regular constitution.

My second point is this ; That we do not find in the Four Gospels any jealousy of the system of ranks and degrees which we found expressly approved in the Old Testament. On the contrary, we find our Lord Himself appointing not one, but two ranks and orders in the ministry, during His own personal walking with His disciples."

"Is this the case? Can you give us chapter and verse for this as you did for your last point?"

"I can. Open your New Testaments now at the Gospel according to S. Luke (who was the ecclesiastical historian of the New Testament). You, Andrews, look at the ninth chapter, and you, Hazlewood, at the tenth. Now, tell me whether you do not find our

Lord Himself, even at this early stage, appointing different ranks and orders of officers, or teachers, whom he selected for posts within his little company of disciples."

"I find in the ninth chapter an account of His sending out His twelve disciples: 'Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And He said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip; neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed and went through the towns, preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere'" (8).

"That is curiously like the account which I have in the next chapter," said Hazlewood, "only this account is longer, and the number of the men is different: 'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come. Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest'——" (9).

"Is that in the tenth chapter?" interrupted Andrews. "I was quite certain that that had been spoken with reference to His appointment of the Twelve."

"You are quite right. You will find it again in S. Mathew's Gospel (10). Its repetition here seems to couple both appointments with the permanent need for pastors, teachers, and labourers. In the same way, the third verse of your chapter, Hazlewood,

(8). Luke ix. 1-7.

(9). Luke x. 1, 2.

(10). Matt. ix. 37, 38.

corresponds with verse sixteen of S. Matthew's tenth chapter. And in the commands to the Seventy, as to what they were to do, and what they were to take with them, and how they were to treat those who received and those who rejected them ; and also in His solemn enforcement of their authority, the parallel between these two appointments and two addresses is very striking" (11).

(11). Expressions recorded as having being used in connection with—

The appointment of the
Twelve.

"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few ; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."—Matt. ix. 37, 38.

"As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick."—Matt. x. 9, 10 ; Luke ix. 2.

"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey."—Matt. x. 9, 10 ; Mark vi. 8 ; Luke ix. 3.

"And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it : but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."—Matt. x. 12-16 ; Mark vi. 11 ; Luke ix. 5.

The appointment of the
Seventy.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few : pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."—Luke x. 2.

"Heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."—ver. 9.

"Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes."—ver. 4.

"And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it ; if not, it shall turn to you again But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same and say, Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth 'on us, we do wipe off against you : notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you that it shall be

"Certainly, there is a parallel ; but what do you mean to infer from that?"

"That our Lord made two separate appointments and instituted two distinct orders (or ranks) of heralds, preachers, or ambassadors, within the company of His disciples, and that each order of these had authority, but the office of one class was higher and more important than the office into which the others were called.

The first appointment was that of the Twelve Apostles, who afterwards come so prominently before us, as occupying a position entirely exceptional in the company. The second was that of the Seventy, of whom nothing is recorded by any of the Evangelists, except S. Luke, and of whom S. Luke himself says nothing further in his Gospel."

"Perhaps, then, they were not intended to be a permanent order, but disappeared immediately."

"Perhaps so ; we shall come to that again. Still, whether it was to be maintained in any future stage of the Church's existence, or not, this fact remains: During the short space of His own personal ministry, our Lord appointed not one set of twelve teachers, whom He afterwards increased to eighty-two, but two distinct and separate orders—one of twelve and the other of seventy, the duties allotted to them being distinct, and the one being decidedly higher than the other."

"Wait a minute. Would not this conclusion of yours be destroyed by the discovery that these seventy were appointed for one short tour only, and then dismissed ; appointed, perhaps, during the absence of the twelve?"

more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city."—
Luke x. 5-13.

"He that receiveth you, receiveth Me ; and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me."—Matt. x. 40.

"He that heareth you, heareth Me."—Luke x. 16.

"Most certainly it would not be *destroyed*. I doubt whether it would even be dangerously weakened by such a discovery; since the appointment was not merely made, but deliberately placed on record by the inspired writer of Church history after the Day of Pentecost, as an act which had significance for the Church in all ages. But where do you find this account of the dismissal of the seventy? or a hint that the Twelve were absent? S. Luke seems to me to say that they had returned ⁽¹²⁾."

"Oh! I cannot say that I know of any distinct statement to this effect; but the thing is possible. And, if it was so, then you are left with only one set of Twelve Apostles all holding equal rank at the start of the new Church after the Ascension."

"Certainly; but still I have the great fact of two ranks during this present stage of the Church's history. But, since you so insist upon your point, let us see whether there is any probability at all of it. You have seen yourself that S. Luke has placed the fact of the second appointment upon everlasting record. His whole language about it runs parallel with the accounts of the appointment of the Twelve. The fair inference is that, as the one of these was undoubtedly a permanent appointment, so the other which corresponded to it was intended to be permanent also. Indeed any appointment which our Lord ever made must be supposed to hold good until he himself revoked it. And that revoking, that undoing, would have been as distinctly recorded as the first doing of it. The absence, therefore, of any distinct statement is sufficient proof that there was no such revoking. But perhaps you rely upon tradition as against Scripture. Will you tell me then what tradition you have upon the subject?"

"No; I have only a vague impression that it may have been so."

"I may leave you, then, to form your own opinion of

the value of that impression against the plain words of S. Luke. For, look at the seventh verse of the tenth chapter. When the Seventy returned from their mission, if their office had ceased, they ought to have spoken of it in the past tense. They ought to have said, 'Lord the spirits *were* subject unto us.' But as a matter of fact they spoke of it as a present thing: 'Lord the spirits *are* subject unto us.' And their Lord in His answer does not say that this is all ended now, and the power gone. No, He rather renews it for the future. 'Behold I *give* unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy; and nothing *shall* by any means hurt you.' Now, do not both our Lord and the Seventy treat the appointment as still remaining valid, even after they had returned? Again, look at the twentieth verse. There He tells them that their 'names are written in Heaven.' What did He mean by that?"

"I do not know; but no doubt it was something very encouraging."

"If it meant that they held an official position in His kingdom which all should recognise, the matter is placed beyond all question. But, whatever it meant, at least you cannot believe that none of them continued to be believers.

The majority at least of them must be presumed to have been among the 'hundred and twenty,' who were found united together at Jerusalem (13) when the Day of Pentecost came upon them.

Well, while they were so waiting and preparing for united action in the Master's cause, the commission once solemnly entrusted to them by their Master, and the blessed assurance which He once pronounced upon them as a body, could not possibly have been forgotten. Indeed you see yourself that it was not forgotten, because here we find that it was afterwards recorded by the Church historian.

These seventy, therefore, having been once appointed

(13). Acts i. 14, 15.

Teachers, and their appointment not forgotten, there must have been some difference made in the Church between them and other disciples who had not been so distinguished.

Think of the desperate need for the help of every worker in those earliest days, and say, if you can, that these men are sure to have been overlooked. When, for example, on the Day of Pentecost, the Apostles had to superintend the baptising of about three thousand souls, can you suppose that they made no use of the seventy who had once been commissioned by the Lord's own voice, and in words very like the words of the Apostolic commission?"

"It does seem unreasonable to ignore that appointment," said Andrews.

"Most unreasonable and most irreverent. No word from the mouth of the Son of God was ever spoken in vain, or recorded in vain. This word must certainly have had a real lasting effect upon the position of those who were so ordained by it. It was not a mere vague charge thrown out vaguely among the whole cluster of the disciples, nor a private whisper to each of them separately. It was a public charge to a selected number sent out in couples; and their number, like the number of the Apostles, was a significant number. It had an intended reference to the past history of the children of Israel.

Remember what we have learned already from the Book of Numbers⁽¹⁴⁾ about the organising of the ancient people of God. They marched through the wilderness, not as a disorderly rabble, but as a disciplined army. Their *one lawgiver* had under him *twelve princes* leading the twelve tribes, and also the *seventy elders*, appointed afterwards to share the care and burden of the multitude. Now, in the first stage of the history of God's new election, while they are only being prepared for the kingdom whose opening is to be inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost, they also

(14). See above, cap. v. pp 66, 67.

appear as an organised company. Their One Lawgiver has under him both the Twelve Apostles, and also the Seventy appointed afterwards to share the care and burden of the work.

You can hardly think the coincidence between these numbers in the Old Testament and the New Testament an accident. You cannot think it, when you remember that on two occasions our Lord distinctly compared the first of His two orders of assistants with the princes of the Old Testament. On His way to Jerusalem, He promised them, 'In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' ⁽¹⁵⁾. We, who know how one of those twelve forfeited the throne, might have guessed that He spoke of them, not according to their individual characters but in their official position. But the matter is put beyond a doubt, when we turn to a like expression recorded in S. Luke's Gospel. There we find that, on the same night in which He was betrayed, He said to His Twelve Apostles, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' ⁽¹⁶⁾. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself being the Lawgiver and Mediator of the new covenant, as Moses was of the old covenant, and the Twelve Apostles being the twelve rulers of the new Israel under Him, as the twelve princes were of the first Israel, can we avoid seeing a correspondence between the two seventies;—the seventy of the Gospels and the seventy elders of the Book of Numbers?

Yet I do not *insist* upon anyone granting me that the new company of God's people, under Jesus Christ the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy appointed afterwards, was framed intentionally after the pattern of the larger company under Moses the Twelve Princes and the Seventy appointed afterwards. All I require

(15). Matt. xix. 28.

(16). S. Luke xxii. 29, 30.

your assent to is only this double fact, which seems to be beyond all question ;—First, that the company of Christ's disciples was, even before the Day of Pentecost, so far organised as to have a divinely-appointed staff of officers with position and authority ; Secondly, that in this organised company there were ranks and degrees among its officers, our Lord's appointment of the seventy not having to any perceptible degree modified the separate position of the twelve."

"Yes ; but that gives you only two orders, not the three which your case requires."

"Not three ? Are we not speaking of the time of our Lord's personal ministry ? Was not He Himself the chief officer of His own Church, the Lawgiver Whose rank none approached, and with Whose supreme authority none of His disciples at any time competed ? If there were two distinct orders under the personal superintendence of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as there are in this diocese, the two distinct orders of Priest and Deacon under the superintendence of the Bishop, does not this give us three, as surely as two and one make three ?

This, then, is the organisation of the little company of one hundred and twenty, whom we find waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost, when S. Luke's second volume opens.

And further, this organisation was felt to be of such practical importance, that S. Peter (fresh from our Lord's instructions, given during the forty days in which He had spoken to them of the kingdom⁽¹⁷⁾ of which they now find themselves the leaders) declared that no vacancy must be left upon their staff. Judas' place must be at once supplied, in order that they may meet the coming crisis with an unbroken front⁽¹⁸⁾.

This company consisted chiefly of officials. Twelve of them were Apostles, seventy of them were Elders or Presbyters. The male and female members, therefore, must have numbered less than forty. It was the staff

(17). Acts i. 3.

(18). Acts i. 20-23.

of officials waiting for the quickening power which was shortly to be breathed into the divine society. It was the staff of officials ready for the reception and the instruction of the three thousand members who were to be added to them on the Day of Pentecost."

"But there is no mention of the Seventy Elders, as you call them, in either the first or second chapters of this book."

"Certainly not. Partly because the writer of it has already recorded their appointment very minutely in the tenth chapter of his first volume; and partly because, in their subordinate position, their co-operation with their superior officers did not need to be expressly stated. But when once the Church has been regularly started, and we are given a glimpse into its internal arrangements, we do find these elders in quiet possession of a recognised office (19).

But I must leave this second stage of the Church's history for another day's discussion. If you can come again to-morrow, I shall try to examine with you the Book of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles; and we shall see whether these traces of a prelatial and threefold system, which we have found in the germ of Christ's Church, disappear or remain when the Church has been once fairly launched upon her world-wide work."

(19). Acts xi. 30; xiv. 23; xv. 2.





CHAPTER VII.

THE CHURCH IN THE PENTECOSTAL DAYS.

WHEN we next sat down to our discussion, I began it by reminding them that, so far, we had been examining only the sources from which the great Church of Christ had taken her rise; and that the principles of her constitution had been seen as yet only in embryo, only in the first germs or seeds.

"I suppose, then," said Hazlewood, "that you have a guilty feel about all your past arguments. You are not unprepared to hear me say that they have given me an impression of ingenious special pleading?"

"What exactly do you mean by special pleading? It is a charge often brought against a book, or an argument; but I am not sure that those who bring it always understand the meaning of the words."

"Why, special pleading means——. Well, I do not know that I am using it in its strictest sense; but what I meant to say was, that you seem to me to be pressing uncommonly small things into your service, and making a tremendous deal out of them."

"Perhaps so; but on the same ground you might object to a botanist using his microscope, to shew you certain very minute features in a seed or bud; features that he would afterwards shew expanded in the full-grown plant, or the full-blown flower. I have been taking you back to the history of the ancient people of God, out of whom God called his new elect, the Christian Church. I have been taking you back to

the history of the first little company, which our Lord made the nucleus of His world-wide Church. How can you possibly expect to see there the ecclesiastical constitution of the nineteenth century, or even that of the second or third centuries, except only dimly and minutely? If you found the large, strong hand of an adult on a new-born infant, you would call it a monstrosity, not a perfection. And if you found the full-blown ecclesiastical system of a full-grown Church in the seed or germ, or embryo, before the Day of Pentecost, you ought to call that a monstrosity also.

No ; if you have discovered in the little company of 'a hundred and twenty,' who assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem, an organisation or constitution, faintly marked, yet containing principles which might possibly expand into our present system, you have discovered all you ought to have expected. Only you may fairly expect to see that these half-hidden principles came afterwards to the front, and developed without any violent revolution into the Church system for which I am arguing.

Well ; we are now at the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, and we have before us a little company with twelve leaders, men of mark, 'the renowned of the congregation.' These twelve had been originally sent out by their Divine Master to proclaim the approach of His heavenly kingdom. They now find themselves sent out again, as the chief officers as well as teachers, within the actual kingdom of which they had then spoken. Seventy others are with them, who had been also sent out and authorised to teach, and work miracles, and act as ambassadors for the same Royal Master. And with these are a few earnest men and women. Here, as I have said already, is the official staff, but the Society which they represented can hardly be said as yet to be constituted, or quickened into life. The numbers here are few, but they are united ; united not only by personal sympathy and affection, but united also under the leadership of the

Twelve, to whom their Lord had for forty days been giving detailed directions about the working of His kingdom ⁽¹⁾.

These are all with one accord in one place ; when ' suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind ; and it filled all the place where they were sitting.' Sights and sounds, as well as the new readiness and courage of the company, prove evidently that a supernatural influence has come ⁽²⁾. The little company, constituted and compacted by Christ Himself, is no longer a mere frame-work, a staff of officers and committee, without the working body of general members. It is henceforth a living body, instinct with supernatural life, equipped and endowed for action. Its action is not the movement of numberless separate individuals, but has the perfect precision of a disciplined corporate body. The twelve leaders rise as one man ; one of them becomes the spokesman of the apostolic college, and in their name and the name of their Divine Head and Patron, throws the doors of the new society open to every comer. That very day three thousand members were enrolled, and formally introduced, under the superintendence of the Twelve, into this new-born brotherhood.

Look at the last few verses of this second chapter, and you shall see how lovingly the historian dwells upon the perfect union, not only of personal affection, but also of common action and common worship, under the rule and leadership of the Apostles. ' They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in [the] breaking of [the] bread ⁽³⁾ and in prayers. And all that believed were together and had all things common ; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need ' ⁽⁴⁾. All this is represented as distinct from

(1). Acts i. 3.

(2). Acts ii. 1 to end.

(3). τῇ διδασκίᾳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῇ κοινῇ, καὶ τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου.—Acts ii. 42.

(4). Acts ii. 42, 44, 45.

the personal friendship of the individual members for one another, of which the historian goes on to say that it made their daily private meals so many manifestations of hospitality and love and joy (5). And it is conclusive that the Church was, from the very day of its birth, a regularly organised society, to which the Lord kept adding day by day such as suffered themselves to be rescued from the hostile attitude of their untoward brethren (6).

The fourth chapter shews us this same formal confederation still; for, when the two Apostles, who were honoured with the first expression of the world's dislike, were loosed from the Sanhedrim, 'they went to their own company' (7); and this company is represented as occupying the same place, worshipping together and uniting in the same words; and 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul' (8).

Again, we are shewn that this union was not merely one of feeling, but of outward corporate action also. The money which was given for the poor was not given separately by individuals according to each man's impulse. It was 'laid at the feet of the Apostles' that *they* might see to its proper distribution (9).

Even the first open sinners, Ananias and Sapphira, had no thought of disputing the full authority of the Apostles (10); and God endorsed that authority by the

(5). "And they continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house (κλῶντές τε κατ' οἶκον ἄρτον), did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, and the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved (τοὺς σωζομένους)."

(6). Compare the connected passages in which the words 'save' and 'saved' are used:—(Joel ii. 32) "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (σωθήσεται), "for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance" (ἔσται ἀνασωθόμενος. LXX.) "save yourselves (σώθητε) from this untoward generation."—Acts iii. 40, 47.

(7). πρὸς τοὺς ἰδίου. —iv. 23. (8). iv. 32. (9). iv. 35, 37.

(10). "Brought a certain part and laid it at the Apostles' feet."—v. 2.

instant infliction of final judgment upon those whom they had duly condemned in the name of the Church's God. The passage which immediately follows the account of Sapphira's death has been explained in two ways. But the most natural interpretation is that henceforward the pre-eminent position of the Apostles was acknowledged on all hands⁽¹¹⁾.

The sixth chapter gives us a perfectly invincible proof of the corporate character of the Church; that it worked as an organised society, and not as an irregular collection of impulsive individuals; and that this organisation and method were found not less, but more essential to its efficiency, as time went on, and as the number of members increased. It tells us that the first approach to a serious division was met at once by the Church's authorised leaders, and met by an action which shewed what value the Apostles placed upon organisation, and upon a well-arranged official staff. 'The Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them'⁽¹²⁾, and, when they were assembled, spoke of the unpleasant feeling which had broken out (not as a symptom of unchristian suspicion or greed, but) as a proof that their ecclesiastical system must be made more complete, not by adding to the numbers of their present officers, but by the creation of a new and distinct order, which should be charged specially with the superintendence of the Church's secular affairs.

They directed the general meeting therefore to select and bring to them seven men of good moral

(11). "Great fear fell upon all the church (ὅλην τὴν ἐκκλησίαν), and upon as many as heard these things. And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them (*Query*—To whom? and in what way?); but the people magnified them."—Acts v. 11, 12, 13.

(12). Acts vi. 2. The expression describes an authoritative summons for a general meeting of the incorporated members of a society.

character, thoroughly religious, prudent, and clever, whom they (the Apostles) might authorise to superintend that branch of work. But they still asserted that they would reserve to themselves the right of regulating both the preaching of God's message, and the conducting of public worship. Their words are : 'Wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business' ⁽¹³⁾. But we will give ourselves continually to [the] prayer and to the ministry of the word' ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Now, this pledge about themselves cannot have been intended to apply only to their own private prayers and private speaking about the Word of God ; because private prayer and individual speaking for God were practised by every true believer, and are the unceasing duties of every Christian. In this very part of this history we find Stephen, the Deacon, ministering the Word and praying in his death agony ; and we find men, women, and children speaking of the Gospel ⁽¹⁵⁾, and Philip preaching ⁽¹⁶⁾ and baptising. No ; this special reservation of the Apostles must have referred to superintendence rather than to practice. They announced that they would hand over the superintendence of the distribution of the Church's alms to the Deacons, though, of course, without authorising them to interfere with any individual Christian's private donations. But they did not resign, either to Deacons or to Elders, the supreme authority over the Church's worship or over the delivery of the Church's message. This they still retained in their

(13). οὗς καταστήσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης (Acts vi. 3). "The duty was not that of ministering to the Hellenistic Jews only, but that of superintending the whole distribution."—*Alford in loc.*

(14). ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου προσκαρτερήσομεν.—Acts vi. 4.

(15). ἐναγγελίζομενοι.—Acts viii. 4.

(16). Φίλιππος δὲ . . . ἐκήρυσεν τὸν Χριστὸν.—Acts viii. 5.

own hands. Then we are told that the Church at large selected the seven men and presented them to the Apostles, and the Apostles, after public prayer, ordained them by the laying of their hands upon their heads, and thus invested them with authority to act.

Now, I cannot see how the organised system of the entire body of the baptised, as a corporate society, could have been more plainly exhibited, than by the fact of this dispute, and the measures which their chief officers took to check it.

A further proof is given in the eighth chapter. Even when the disciples were scattered far and wide by persecution, the society remained unbroken. The Apostles, indeed, remained at Jerusalem, but from this, as from a centre of operations, they superintended the growing work of their vast society, the kingdom which the God of Heaven had established on the earth. Observe how they kept the newest and most distant branches of the spreading vine in living union and communion with the original centre, and therefore with the entire Church. One of the recently ordained Seven (Philip) had been the means, under God, of bringing many of the Samaritans into the Church by baptism. The news of these conversions was sent to the Apostles, and we are not told that Peter and John resolved to go down to them, but it is expressly stated that the whole bench (or chapter, or college) of Apostles resolved that they should be efficiently represented in Samaria; and they sent Peter and John as representatives of the Apostolic Order. When these two arrived at Samaria, they confirmed the newly-baptised as full and recognised members of the living body, into which their baptism had admitted them. And as soon as these young disciples were brought into actual contact with the chiefs and central authority of the Church, at once the life sprang out and manifested itself in them; they received and shewed evidently that they received the Holy Ghost⁽¹⁷⁾. This

(17). Acts viii. 5-17.

again brings the Church before us, not as a mob, or as a number of separate and independent companies, but as one living corporate whole, a well-organised society with a regular official staff and system of management.

The same is shewn in the ninth chapter, which tells of the new instrument which their Lord raised up to take special charge of the new phase of Christian progress : 'When Saul came to Jerusalem, he essayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple,' until Barnabas brought him to *the Apostles*, and their decision was final⁽¹⁸⁾. One more instance is all which I shall bring forward now. As in the eighth chapter we found a large extension of the Church under Philip, the Deacon's preaching in Samaria, so in the end of the eleventh chapter⁽¹⁹⁾ we find a similar increase in Antioch, owing to the words of some men of Cyprus and Cyrene. As before, this news also was reported to the Church's centre at Jerusalem; and again the Apostles sent forth a delegate (Barnabas), who brought Saul, and these two were the means of extending and deepening the movement, and of cementing the bonds of fellowship between these new members and the chief and central authorities at Jerusalem. It is true that neither of these two was yet of apostolic rank, and therefore neither of them seems to have laid hands upon these converts; but one practical effect of their mission was a very happy one. The new Christians at Antioch subscribed and sent relief to the Christian poor at Jerusalem. And Barnabas and Paul had the pleasure of handing over to the Elders of the Church, on their return, this substantial proof of Christian fellowship in the Gospel.

It is hardly possible for any attentive reader of these chapters to question the statement, that the Church of Christ was started from the very first as an organised society, under the superintendence of the Apostles;

(18). Acts ix. 26, 27, 28.

(19). Acts xi. 19-30.

or that it had a framework and Church system from its very foundation.

Indeed, this is little more than a paraphrase of the statement, that the Church was 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets'⁽²⁰⁾. The disciples were no mob. They were not an ever changing conglomeration of little congregations forming and dividing as they pleased, and each congregation with as much (or as little) authority as any other. They formed no ideal company, whose members were united only by invisible bonds. They were bound visibly together as a regular corporation. Their officers were in the first instance appointed by our Lord Himself; and the members were all regularly admitted by the ceremony of baptism, and at once found themselves parts of a living whole, branches in one Vine⁽²¹⁾, stones in one Temple⁽²²⁾, members of one Body⁽²³⁾.

Though the Church's Head was now out of sight, though, as she grew, her members became more widely scattered, though the Spirit which animated the Church was unseen, though her true Home was above the sky, and though her highest motives and hopes and fears were unintelligible to the world, still the Church, into which each new convert was admitted by his baptism, was a distinct, visible corporation, governed by the Twelve Apostles. It contained all the baptised, whether they were sincere or not sincere in the vows they had taken upon themselves; and thus it was, as our Lord had predicted of it, like a vast net enclosing fish of all kinds good and bad⁽²⁴⁾, or like a vast and spreading vine, with branches which bore no fruit, as well as branches which bore fruit⁽²⁵⁾.

(20). Ephes. ii. 20.

(22). Ephes. ii. 20.

(21). John xv. 5.

(23). I Cor. xii. 12-27.

(24). "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."—Matt. xiii. 47, 48.

(25). "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

"Take all that for granted, which I believe is formally denied by none, except by the Congregationalists and (I suppose) the Plymouth Brethren. But what has all this to do with Episcopacy? It seems rather to run in favour of one order only of officers, who should be all of equal rank and answer to the Apostles."

"One rank? Why, you forget the Seven Deacons in the sixth chapter, though the martyrdom of Stephen might surely have kept you from forgetting his order. And you have forgotten also the Elders mentioned in the thirtieth verse of the eleventh chapter, to whom the Christians at Antioch sent their subscriptions by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

"True indeed. I see you want to make out that within this evidently organised society you find three distinct ranks of officers, differing in name and work and authority."

"I do. You cannot have followed me so far without perceiving that the chief government was vested absolutely in the Twelve Apostles, to whom the Lord had said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (26). These Apostles seem hitherto to have been able to superintend the entire field of the Church's work, and to have received implicit and almost unquestioning obedience. The one only hint of any doubt about their decisions is found in the eleventh chapter, where S. Peter was narrowly questioned as to his treatment of the Gentiles. Now, the organising of the Church and the adapting its original machinery to its rapid growth having been the great subjects to which the historian was directing our thoughts, it is not strange that hitherto the Apostles have seemed to be almost everything and the other church officers nothing. In the rapid outline of the

Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away : and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit."—John xv. 1, 2.

(26). Luke xxii. 29, 30.

history of a diocese, or of a military campaign, the bishop, or general, would be the chief and perhaps the only figure visible; the subordinate working of the clergy or officers under their leader would usually be assumed rather than described.

Yet, under this apparent silence about them, we do find incidentally (as it were) that there were some in the Church who were called Elders⁽²⁷⁾. And one most significant act of the Apostles was the ordination of seven men for the superintendence on the Church's behalf of a very important part of her financial work. We have therefore evidence cropping up accidentally and unconsciously, and therefore the most satisfactory and convincing kind of evidence, to shew that the organisation of the Pentecostal Church contained, as the company of Christ's personal followers had also contained, divers orders of leaders and officers and workers. The company, which was originally led and officered by (1) the Divine Lawgiver, (2) the Twelve Apostles, and (3) the Seventy, has now developed into the vast Brotherhood, which is ruled by (1) the Twelve Apostles, (2) the Elders, and (3) the Seven Deacons."

"Wait a minute. I cannot help thinking that you are making too much of that one chance expression in that one short verse, 'Which also they did, and sent it *to the elders* by the hands of Barnabas and Saul'⁽²⁸⁾."

"How am I making too much of it? And why do you call it a chance expression?"

"Because it was never intended to describe the ecclesiastical system of the Church. For all we know that they may have been only the older and more respected of the disciples, not a separate order of officials. And in any case I do not see what right you have to assume that they were the Seventy ordained by our Lord."

"Have I said that they were the Seventy?"

(27) Acts xi. 1-4.

(28). Acts xi. 30.

"No; but you evidently meant to say it. You want us to assume that they were."

"Not one word have I yet said about this. I have merely brought out the facts, as they are told by S. Luke, who writes with entire unconsciousness that any controversy is involved in his statements. It is these facts which are giving you the impression of a connection between 'the seventy' and these 'elders'; and a most correct impression I myself believe it to be, but it is not necessary for my argument. However, look at the case as we have it here. This is the first distinct mention of 'elders' in the Christian Church; and if it was also the last, we might fancy, as you have suggested, that perhaps the term was not used technically, but only with reference to the experience and character of some of the disciples. But even in that case, when the whole Church was itself so very young, who could have deserved the title of 'elder' so well as those who were of the company before the Day of Pentecost? And how many males were there of these, beside 'the seventy,' whose number would so naturally have suggested the title, which certainly had been given to the society in the Old Testament?"

Thus, even that one 'chance expression,' as you call it, might alone and by itself suggest the idea of 'the seventy,' whose names were 'written in heaven' before the Day of Pentecost, and who could not, therefore, have been numbered among the three thousand new converts who were baptised upon that day. But this, although the first, is by no means the last mention of 'elders' in this book. And all the after notices prove them to have been a distinct order in the Church, formally and authoritatively ordained for their work and office. Thus in the fourteenth chapter we read of the apostles (Paul and Barnabas) that on their second tour among these converts in Lystris, Iconicene, and Antioch, 'they ordained them Elders in every city' (29). In the fifteenth chapter, we read that the Church was

(29). Acts xiv.

stirred by so vital a controversy that a full and authoritative decision was needed. To settle it the first recorded council of the Church was held at Jerusalem, in which we find the Elders deliberating with the Apostles. 'The Apostles and Elders came together to consider this matter' (30). Their names were joined with those of the Apostles in the wording of the decree and pastoral letter which was issued by the council. It ran thus: 'The Apostles and Elders [and] brethren send greeting unto the brethren, &c.' (31). If the 'and' which stands in our authorised version between 'elders' and 'brethren,' is to be retained, the point is very strongly marked. For then we have the Elders and Apostles both marked out as having distinct offices which separated them from the laity. Even if the 'and' is to be omitted, the Elders are still distinguished from the Apostles, who might have claimed, and did upon other occasions claim, that they had a pre-eminent title to the name of Elder (32). To the same effect is the use of the term in the twentieth chapter, where S. Paul called the Elders of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletum. There he delivered a charge to them, in which he treated them, not as the seniors only among the Christians at Ephesus, but as men solemnly invested with a pastoral office. He said unto them: 'Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the children of God which He hath purchased with His own blood' (33). You see, then, that, although the first mention of the Elders comes in so undemonstratively, the very reason for this is that they were an order so fully recognised when S. Luke wrote, that he did not think the Church needed any explanation of their office there."

"Why then does he take so much pains to describe the origin of Deacon, which must have been just as well known as that of Elder?"

(30). Acts xv. 6.

(32). 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 John i; 3 John i.

(31). Acts xv. 23.

(33). Acts xx. 25.

"Because, though an order already existing called for no special historical notice, the creation of a new order did. And this is a very important point in the establishment of a connection between the Seventy of the Gospels and the Elders of the Acts of the Apostles. The office of the Seven, described in the sixth chapter, has been in all ages identified with the office of Deacon, though not the title, but only the verb and noun from which the title is derived, are used in this chapter (34). Again, this office of Deacon is universally admitted to be lower and less important than that of the Elder or Presbyter. Yet this book of Church history records very circumstantially the whole account of the first creation of the lower order, and says nothing whatever about the creation of the higher order. This is one matter which needs explanation.

On the other hand, in his first treatise, of which he explains that this is a continuation, S. Luke gives a full account of the institution by our Lord of an order of Seventy, and of words spoken to them which imply that we ought to hear of them again; and yet there is no further mention of them as 'the seventy.' This is a second matter which needs explanation.

And now, to clench the matter, here we find, in settled possession of official rank within the Church, an order of Elders in the very position which we should have expected the Seventy to hold, and with a title which would have been naturally suggested by the reference of their original number to 'the seventy elders' of the Old Testament.

Three unexplained phenomena are here, which all become perfectly natural and simple if we identify the Elders of the Pentecostal Church with the Seventy of the company out of which the Church took its rise. On this supposition everything falls into its place and becomes natural and simple.

It becomes quite natural for S. Luke to say nothing

(34). διακονῶν τραπεζαῖς (ver. 2). τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου (ver. 4).

about the creation of the order of Elders, *if he has already described that creation in the tenth chapter of his first treatise.*

It becomes quite natural for him to say nothing more in his first volume about the Seventy, *if he means to describe their future work in his second volume.*

And thirdly, it becomes perfectly natural that the order of Elders should rank higher than the Seven ordained by the Apostles, *if they had been previously appointed by the Lord Himself*; for they would thus share with the Apostles a pre-eminent position, which the deacons could not reach.

This identification of the Elders with the Seventy is not merely the simplest but also the only satisfactory explanation of the facts of the case; and therefore it is the true explanation, and worthy of a full and cordial reception."

"I see," said Hazlewood, "you find in the first volume a head which ought to have a tail, and in the second a tail which ought to have a head; and when you examine them you find that they exactly suit each other, and so you join them."

"On the same principle," said Andrews, "as that on which we accept the law of gravity and the earth's motion, these being the simplest and only satisfactory explanations of all the observed facts."

"Precisely so. And now you see that we have in the Pentecostal Church, merely the fuller development of the principles which we had already found in the first company of the disciples. When their Head had ascended into Heaven, after breathing upon His Apostles and investing them with a mission corresponding to that which He Himself had received from His Father⁽³⁵⁾, the Twelve found themselves at once in the first and highest, and no longer in the second post of authority in the Church; and they had the

(35). "As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."—John xx. 21.

Seventy as assistants. A few months were enough to prove that the old threefold principle must be brought out again. They evoked it by the creation of the new order of the Seven, instead of merely increasing the numbers in their own order, or in that of the Seventy.

Henceforward the Church had once more the first regime of three:—First, the Twelve; then the Seventy; and last of all, the Seven. These were (in a sense) the successors of the One Lawgiver, the Twelve princes, and the Seventy elders. Gradually, through diminution by death and increase by ordination, the original numbers must have been inappropriate. New names had to be applied to them, and perhaps coined from the nature of their work. But this change of title is not at all likely to have been sudden, or the names to have been applied with any rigid strictness. Offices must always be in existence before there is any necessity for titles, and titles are seldom so palpably suitable as to be at once applied universally. Yet it seems natural enough to suppose that the Twelve loved best the title which had been expressly given to them by their Lord; and that the well-known title ‘Elder’ soon associated itself with the Seventy; and ‘Deacon’ (or Servant)⁽³⁶⁾, with those who were appointed to preside over the ‘service of tables’⁽³⁷⁾.

Yet a considerable time passed away before these names became the exclusive property of any. For Epaphroditus is spoken of as the Apostle of the Church of Philippi⁽³⁸⁾; and S. Peter and S. John both speak of themselves as Elders⁽³⁹⁾. And indeed this second title is sometimes used so as to make it diffi-

(36). Διάκονος.

(37). διακονεῖν τραπέζαις.

(38). “Epaphroditus my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but *your messenger*, and he that ministered to my wants.” Ἐπαφ. τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συνστρατιῶτήν μου, ὃμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου.—Phil. ii. 25.

(39). 1 Pet. iv.; 2 John i.; 3 John i.

cult to decide whether it is intended to refer to a precise order of officials, or only to the aged or the experienced (40).

Also, those holding the second rank are often spoken of as 'overseers,' or 'bishops' (41); and anyone who overlooks anyone else's business is called a bishop, so that it is used in one case for every 'busybody in other men's matters' (42).

But still the tendency is more and more towards an appropriation of these terms to distinct offices in the Church. And amid all the shiftings of names and titles, these three distinct ranks, or orders, certainly existed in the Pentecostal Church. First, Apostles; Secondly, Elders, or Presbyters; and Thirdly, the Deacons, or the Seven. For in the twenty-first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we have this last title applied as a distinguishing mark to Philip (43)."

"Yes; but as the apostles have passed away, you have no precedent in that for more than two of our present orders—Presbyters or Priests, and Deacons. You have actually disproved the Divine origin of Bishops."

"Leave that alone for the present. You may be right, or you may not. We shall come to that again. All I want to know at present is this: Does the Bible describe the Church of Pentecost as an organised society, having a regular system of management and Church offices?

Does the Bible describe this Church system as containing distinct and unequal orders or ranks of office?

(40). "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren." *πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιλήξῃς*. κ. τ. λ. —I Tim. v. 1.

(41). So by S. Paul in his address to the 'Elders' (*πρεσβυτέρους*) of Ephesus—"The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (*ἐπισκόπους*). Compare Titus i. 5, 7.

(42). *ἀλλοτριεπισκοπος*.—I Pet. iv. 15.

(43). Philip the Evangelist, which was "of the seven" (*δύτος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ*).—Acts xxi. 8.

And have we, or have we not, seen three such ranks ;—Apostles ruling the whole Church, with the two distinct orders of Elders and Deacons working with them and under them? If you answer these three questions in the affirmative, you grant all I want to prove as yet.”





CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST CENTURY.

NOW we have our foundation laid. We have seen that the Christian Church was founded by our Lord and His Apostles as an organised society, with an original constitution. We have examined the history of the first twenty years of its existence, and we have found that its constitution contained the principle of prelacy, or unequal ranks and orders in the official staff.

During the whole period of which the first eleven chapters of the Book of the Acts of Apostles treat, the Church's work *was superintended by the Apostles*, who employed two lower orders, named respectively the 'Elders' ⁽¹⁾ and the 'Seven' ⁽²⁾. This superintendence by the Apostles is plain upon the very face of the sacred history. It is acknowledged on every side. It is admitted to have existed not only during those first twenty years, but also for the whole period of the lifetime of the original twelve. They have never been even suspected of laying down their authority, or acting as if they were in all respects on a level with other officers of the Church. Every phase of Church work and Church growth had always their prompt and earnest attention.

The only answer by which any have ever attempted to meet that fact is this: That the Apostles were

(1). Acts xi. 30.

(2). Acts xxi. 8.

exceptional men, and therefore cannot be taken as precedents for others.

Now it is quite true that they were exceptional men, yet it cannot be inferred from this that they are *in no way* to be followed ; or else we might argue that we are not 'to walk so as we have the apostles for our example' (3), which would, of course, be absurd.

The exact statement of the truth from which they argue is this : That in some respects the apostles were exceptional men, and in other respects they were 'men of like passions with ourselves' (4). They had certain qualifications which no others ever had, and certain duties which were not transferred to others. But they had also other duties which were transferred, and other qualifications which were shared.

The real question, therefore, ought to be : Was their permanent superintendence of the Church one of their exceptional tasks ? Or, was it one which others might possibly be authorised to exercise along with them, or after their decease ?

In examining this question, I admit at once that, if their authority to rule the Church depended upon their possession of their exceptional gifts, then that authority cannot be claimed for any who have not the gifts also. But a little thought will shew you that this was not the case. It was certainly not the case in respect of the highest of all their personal gifts, their special illumination and inspiration by God's Spirit.

Their permanent authority to rule the Church could not have depended upon that inspiration, because so far as it differed in kind from the help which the same Spirit gives now, it was an impulse which came at intervals only, on certain occasions, and for certain words and certain writings. S. Peter, for instance, was not acting under inspiration at Antioch, when S. Paul 'withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed' (5). Now, if the apostles' authority to super-

(3). Phil. iii. 17.

(4). Acts xiv. 15.

(5). Gal. ii. 11.

intend the Church depended upon a power which came only at intervals, their authority also must have been occasional only, and fitful, instead of being the permanent, habitual thing which we find it was.

And further, if their authority to rule depended upon their inspiration, or was at all bound up with it, it would be impossible to explain this fact, that the authority belonged to Matthias⁽⁶⁾ and Barnabas⁽⁷⁾, of whom we have no proof that they ever were inspired ; and did not belong to Mark or Luke, who were writers of books of canonical Scripture. In the same way it is quite plain that this permanent task of habitually ruling the Church's doctrine, worship, and clergy, was quite distinct, and capable of being separated from the apostles' other tasks ; such as opening the gates of the Church on the Day of Pentecost ; standing as eye-witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ ; working miracles, or imparting to others the power of working miracles. So our assertion may be true, or it may be untrue ; but at least it is not an absurdity or impossibility, when we say that the apostles may have been succeeded in their office of ruling by men who never received any of their personal and exceptional gifts."

"It is only in this sense, then," said Andrews, "that you say your bishops are the successors of the apostles."

"Of course, only in this sense. So far forth as the apostles were holy and earnest men, they are succeeded by all holy and earnest disciples of Christ. So far as they were ambassadors for Christ and preachers of His Gospel, so far they are succeeded by all real ministers of Christ's Church. So far as they were during their lifetime superintendents and rulers of the Church, so far they are succeeded by all true bishops of the Church ; but so far as they were specially called and endowed for the exceptional work which was concerned with the foundation of the Christian Church, so far they have no successors."

(6). Acts i. 26.

(7). Acts xiv. 14.

"You have to prove, then," said Andrews, "that the apostles had a permanent authority to rule, and exercised it during their lifetime, and then that others exercised it after them."

"Well, you have heard our Lord committing to them authority to rule His Israel⁽⁸⁾; and you can hardly ignore His thrice repeated charge to S. Peter to do all the work of a shepherd to His lambs, His sheep, and the choice ones of His flock⁽⁹⁾. You have only to read S. Peter's epistles to see how he understood this charge, and felt himself a shepherd of the flock⁽¹⁰⁾.

Again, you have examined with me the first eleven chapters of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and have seen the apostles exercising their authority for nearly twenty years after the Church had been fairly started on her great enterprise. You have not seen any symptom of their laying this authority down, or warning the Church that there must be no permanent imitation of it.

Indeed, you never find them managing the Church's affairs as exceptional men. Even in that great crisis, recorded in the fifteenth chapter, which was in danger of splitting up the Church into two hostile camps, you do not hear them speak as if they were competent to decide all questions off-hand from their own internal convictions, or as if they were a mere staff of founders separate from the Church and from her regular officers; nor yet as if they had the right to give their infallible orders to her from outside. No; but they consulted with the elders; they debated freely with them in council as to the Church's duty in this matter. Strong, earnest arguments were used on both sides, and the motive which weighed with the council, and determined its final sentence, was not any authoritative

(8). Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30. cf. John xx. 21-24.

(9). S. John xxi. 15-18.—*See Alford in loc.*

(10). 1 Pet. i. 13; ii. 1, 2; ii. 11-19; iii. 1-12; v. 1-10.

declaration of any one apostle's conviction ; but the plain statements of facts which had occurred in the providence of God ; statements of facts which pointed clearly to the one conclusion ; so that S. James had no difficulty in summing up and pronouncing the unanimous sentence of 'the apostles and elders with the whole Church' ⁽¹¹⁾. And we read in the sixteenth chapter that 'as Paul and Silas went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep that were ordained of *the apostles and elders* which were at Jerusalem. And so were the Churches established in the faith and increased in number daily' ⁽¹²⁾.

That is not the language which would have been used if the decree was one which came from an exceptional body, and in the framing of which the permanent staff of elders had no share.

And here we may observe, in passing, that the Church has now been fairly on her way for about nineteen years, and has shewn no symptom yet of separating into communities or congregations. It has spread through the entire extent of Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, and the Island of Cyprus, yet it is still one organised society, all parts of it bound, and content to be bound by the central authorities, which we find to have been composed of two distinct but co-operating bodies, 'the apostles and elders.'

Of course, when we shew that the apostles made no sign of giving up the reins entrusted to them, as time went on and the Church passed from its infancy into the vigour of youth, some may venture to impute it to a misunderstanding or unwillingness on their part. It is important, therefore, to observe that the Lord Himself added to the apostolic college two additional members in the persons of Paul and Barnabas, several years after the Church had been actually started among both Jews and Gentiles. This does not look as if God Himself desired that this office, which was so evidently

(11). Acts xv. 22.

(12). Acts xvi. 4, 5.

distinct from the ordinary ministerial office held by the elders, should be allowed to die out and come to an end.

This impression will be immensely strengthened by an examination of the manner in which these two later apostles exercised the authority committed to them. They did not at all confine their authoritative action to the formation of congregations, but applied it most vigorously to later stages of Church life. We find them 'ordaining elders in every city' ⁽¹³⁾, and S. Paul laying hands, as S. Peter and S. John had done in the beginning, upon the newly baptised ⁽¹⁴⁾. We find them making visitation tours among the churches which they had previously founded, confirming the churches, and warning and exhorting them ⁽¹⁵⁾, even in cases where there were bands of presbyters (elders) to rule the disciples ⁽¹⁶⁾. Evidently, S. Paul and S. Barnabas felt themselves as fully authorised as the original apostles to take charge of all Church interests; and (as you may see from S. Paul's epistles) ⁽¹⁷⁾ they did exercise this superintendence most authoritatively during the whole space of their lives.

This shews us the exercise of authoritative superintendence over the presbyters and deacons of the Church for more than thirty years after the Day of Pentecost, since S. Paul's later epistles were written after the year A.D. 63.

S. John's epistles carry us on to the very close of the first century, yet even then he gives no hint that there is no longer any need for the exercise of superintendence, or that it had been an exceptional authority intended only for the Church's infancy. On the contrary, we have not only the authoritative language

(13). Acts xiv. 23.

(15). Acts xv. 36-41, xvi. 1-6.

(14). Acts xix. 6.

(16). Acts xx. 17-38.

(17). 1 Cor. ix. 1-7; xiv. 37; xvi. 1; 2 Cor. x. 8; xi. 5; Gal. i. 1, &c.; Col. iv. 16, 17; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14; Epistles to Timothy and Titus throughout; Philemon i. 8.

of the second epistle ⁽¹⁸⁾, but also the very strong wording of the third. 'I wrote unto the Church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the Church' ⁽¹⁹⁾.

There can be no doubt that he who wrote thus in the last years of the first century felt that he still retained authority over such a pre-eminent presbyter as is described here.

For the entire space, therefore, of the first century we have Scripture proof of the existence of authoritative superintendents over the two orders of presbyters (elders) and deacons. Is not that sufficient proof of a Divine authority for the threefold nature of the Christian ministry?"

"It is, perhaps, a sufficient proof of a Divine precedent for a threefold division," said Andrews; "but you have yet to shew us Scripture records of the apostles handing on their office of superintendence to successors."

"Have you any right to ask this? Their successors could hardly be expected to appear until the predecessors were gone. And when their predecessors passed away, the power of producing canonical Scripture passed away with them. You do not call any writings inspired unless they can be proved to have been written or endorsed by the apostles. Such writings must, of course, cease at the death of the apostles. As a matter of fact, such of them as are histories take us down no further than the year A.D 63. We can, therefore, give you no inspired historical record after that date. So, if I have shewn the threefold ministry in active existence during the whole of that

(18). 2 John i. 5, 10.

(19). 3 John i. 9, 10.

period, it is as much as you can expect from Scripture. For anything of a later date you ought to look to later writings, which are all uninspired and therefore (people say) unreliable.

Now, the unfairness of the controversy is this : We are challenged to shew our prelatic system in Scripture. We do shew it in Scripture during the whole period of which Scripture history treats. We are then challenged to shew it at a later date. We do shew it for the later date from the writing of that date. 'Ah!' they say, 'those are uninspired writings.' Of course they are, because none of the writings of that date were inspired. We are asked, therefore, to prove from Scripture historical facts which happened after Scripture history had closed. That sounds like an absurdity. Yet curiously enough (and when we remember who superintended the writings of all Holy Scripture, it is something more than curious) we have, incidentally as it were, in Epistles written after the history was concluded, glimpses into the internal condition of the Church in three very different localities. And these glimpses give us the very evidence for which we are asked, but which should never have been needed.

Jerusalem was the great city of God in Palestine. Ephesus was a remarkable Gentile city near the western coast of Asia Minor. Crete was an island in the Mediterranean Sea. These are so different from each other, that they may surely be looked upon as specimen cases. They may be relied upon to give us fair specimens of ordinary Church arrangements in the first century. If we find the same system of Church government established in all three of those very dissimilar localities, every one ought to be satisfied that that was the prevailing system of the period. Let us examine them.

In the city of Jerusalem, the Twelve Apostles established the order of Deacons, ordaining them publicly with their own hands⁽²⁰⁾. In the same city of Jeru-

(20). Acts vi. 5, 6.

saalem, the order of Presbyters (or elders) is expressly recorded to have been in existence ⁽²¹⁾. It was also for several years the seat of the whole company of the Apostles ⁽²²⁾. Yet, in the Church at Jerusalem, where we should least expect to find it, we discover one man in a prominent position of superintendence, and his position recognised by the apostles and elders and the whole Church. This man was S. James, the Lord's brother. The first notice we have of his occupying a position at Jerusalem, in any way distinct from that held by other apostles, is found in S. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. S. Paul says that three years after his conversion he went up (A.D. 40) to Jerusalem to see S. Peter; and that, though apparently residing with S. Peter, he saw no other of the Apostles, but only James, the Lord's brother ⁽²³⁾. Yet S. Luke seems to record this visit to S. James as being an introduction to the apostles for the sake of recognition ⁽²⁴⁾. Apparently, then, S. James was looked upon as representing the apostolic college at Jerusalem, although there are doubts whether he was himself one of the original twelve.

The second mention of him is in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. S. Peter, when supernaturally released from prison, told the Christians in the first house he reached to send news of his release, not to the apostles generally, or to the elders, or brethren, but 'to James and the brethren' ⁽²⁵⁾. That seems to have been in the year A.D. 44. We might have thought very lightly about both of these obscure hints, if it were not that they harmonise so strikingly with more distinct statements.

Seven years afterwards, in the Council at Jerusalem, held A.D. 51, we find the same James occupying still

(21). Acts xi. 30. The order of Elders is here shewn not merely to have existed at Jerusalem, but to have had such a recognised position as to have been known at Antioch.

(22). Act viii. 1, 14.

(23). Gal. i. 18, 19.

(24). Acts ix. 26-28.

(25). Acts xii. 17.

a marked position of pre-eminence. The apostles and elders are gathered. There has been much discussion. S. Peter has made the first deep impression upon the council by his reminder of the remarkable fact which had occurred to himself. He is followed by a silent attention to the facts which S. Paul and S. Barnabas relate. Then the effect is such that S. James can rise, sum up the whole debate, and give *his sentence* ⁽²⁶⁾—which is far more than his own personal opinion—as *the decision of the council*. It is committed to writing, and circulated as the decree of the apostles and elders and the whole Church ⁽²⁷⁾. Thus, for at least eleven years, his marked position at Jerusalem has remained unchanged. Later on, we hear of it again. S. Paul tells us that, even after this, he found himself compelled to withstand S. Peter to the face, because he was unduly influenced by certain, whom he describes as coming, not from Jerusalem, or from the apostles or elders there, but ‘*from James*’ ⁽²⁸⁾. Evidently, S. James was still occupying a position of such importance at Jerusalem, that ~~he was~~ considered as the representative of the Church there.

Once more, S. Paul goes up to Jerusalem. It is the year A.D. 58. S. Luke says, ‘When we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly, and the day following *we went in unto James*, and all the elders were present’ ⁽²⁹⁾.

You see, then, that, in spite of the frequent presence of so many of the apostles in the city of Jerusalem, a distinct position of pre-eminence and superintendence over clergy and people was permanently held by S. James, the Lord’s brother. This can only be accounted for by the supposition that a permanent superintendence over presbyters and deacons was

(26). “Wherefore my sentence is —.” διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω μὴ παρενοχλεῖν κ.τ.λ.—Acts xv. 19.

(27). Acts xv. 22, 23; xvi. 4.

(28). Gal. ii. 12.

(29). Acts xxi. 17, 18.

thought necessary; and that S. James was (what all Church history declares him to have been until his death) the first superintendent, or overseer, or bishop of the Church in Jerusalem. We have thus one instance of an episcopate exercised with full apostolic approval, and therefore of either apostolic or Divine institution.

Now we turn to a very different city many a mile away from it. Ephesus, the city of the heathen goddess Diana, was famous for the magnificence of her temple and the enthusiasm of her votaries. S. Paul had confirmed the first Christians there ⁽³⁰⁾. For three years and a-half it had been the scene of his most devoted labour ⁽³¹⁾. It had a staff of clergy whom he once summoned to Miletum, and who received from him, and gave to him the strongest marks of personal affection ⁽³²⁾. It would not seem to us to have needed any exceptional legislation. In S. Paul's epistle to it, there is no hint of its being subjected to any exceptional ecclesiastical treatment, although Church union and system is a very prominent subject in that epistle. The Church of Ephesus may, therefore, be taken as a fair sample of ordinary Church arrangement in the first century.

All parties ought to be very thankful that we have, from two letters written by S. Paul to Timothy, special means of discovering what the arrangements were there.

Well, though these letters were not written with the object of teaching us any historical facts, but in order to set his duty and responsibility before Timothy, we do learn a great many important facts from them.

We find that S. Paul had left Timothy there to superintend the doctrinal teaching of its clergy ⁽³³⁾,

(30). Acts xix. 1-7.

(31). Acts xx. 31.

(32). Acts xx. 31, 36, 37, 38.

(33). "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus . . . that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine . . . This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy."—1 Tim. i. 3, 18.

to arrange the order of Church worship⁽³⁴⁾, to examine the character and qualifications of candidates for the two orders of 'Elder' (or 'Presbyter,' or 'Bishop')⁽³⁵⁾, and also of 'Server' (or Deacon)⁽³⁶⁾, and generally, in spite of his youth, to behave himself as one who had a special post and authority in the Church of God⁽³⁷⁾. We find also that this authority and office had been given to him *by* the laying on of S. Paul's hands⁽³⁸⁾, together *with* the laying on of the hands of the Presbyters⁽³⁹⁾. He was also to receive cautiously charges against Presbyters (or Bishops), but if they were found guilty, he was to administer a public rebuke to them⁽⁴⁰⁾. He was charged most solemnly

(34). "I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority . . . I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands . . . In like manner that women adorn themselves in modest apparel . . . But I suffer not a woman to teach."—1 Tim. ii. 1-13.

(35). "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife . . . one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity . . ."—1 Tim. iii. 1-8.

(36). "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued . . . ruling their children and their houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. iii. 8-14.

(37). "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15). "These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth."—1 Tim. iv. 11, 12; vi. 13, 14, 20; 2 Tim. i. 6; ii. 1, 2; iv. 1, 2.

(38). "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses." (2 Tim. ii. 2). "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands (*διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου*)."—2 Tim. i. 6.

(39). "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given unto thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (*μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου*)."—1 Tim. iv. 14.

(40). "Against a presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."—1 Tim. v. 19, 20.

to be very careful about ordaining for the ministry⁽⁴¹⁾; and he was also given instructions about the behaviour which he was to enforce throughout the Church, as to the provision for the clergy⁽⁴²⁾, the treatment of heretics⁽⁴³⁾, the behaviour of the various classes of Christians towards each other⁽⁴⁴⁾, and especially as to his careful guarding of the sacred deposit of the Christian creed⁽⁴⁵⁾. In the second epistle there is a special direction to commit to others the sacred office which he has himself received from the apostle. And the charge to make full proof of the ministry here entrusted to him is solemnly enforced upon him in the full view of S. Paul's approaching death⁽⁴⁶⁾.

This is surely a most full and minute proof that S. Paul, with the assistance of others, had committed to Timothy, by the imposition of hands, the very office which has ever since been handed down from bishop to bishop. And Timothy is charged to execute this office fearlessly over the two orders of Presbyter and Deacon until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ⁽⁴⁷⁾. At Ephesus, therefore, as at Jerusalem, we find a distinct record in Holy Scripture that the office

(41). "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man: keep thyself pure."—1 Tim. vi. 21, 22.

(42). "Let the presbyters that rule well be counted worthy of a double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward."—1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

(43). "If any man teach otherwise . . . from such withdraw thyself."—1 Tim. vi. 3-6.

(44). 1 Tim. ii. 9; iv. 1-6; v. 1-17; vi. 1-3 and 17-20.

(45). 1 Tim. i. 3, 18; iv. 6, 7, 16; vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14; ii. 2, 15; iii. 14; iv. 1, 2.

(46). 2 Tim. ii. 2.—"I charge thee, therefore, before God . . . make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."—iv. 9.

(47). 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14.

for which we are searching was conferred by apostolic hands⁽⁴⁸⁾ upon one who was to exercise it after the apostle's death, and commit it to faithful men who should be able to teach others⁽⁴⁹⁾.

The third glimpse given us is somewhat less distinct, but it is quite sufficient for our purpose. It is given in a letter written by S. Paul to Titus, which shows that Titus had been left in Crete by the apostle, to act as Superintendent over the clergy and people in that island. It contains these three passages: (1). 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting and ordain Elders, (*i.e.* Presbyters) in every city as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless,' and so on. 'For a Bishop (*i.e.* Presbyter), must be blameless' ⁽⁵⁰⁾. (2). 'These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority' ⁽⁵¹⁾. (3). 'A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject' ⁽⁵²⁾.

Here you see the very proofs we sought. We catch glimpses only of what was doing in the later days of the apostolic age. But all those glimpses are directed towards Divinely selected specimens, taken from Jewish and Gentile cities and from the islands of the sea. The same system being discovered in every one of these, we feel that we are not being presented with exceptional cases, but fair samples of the ordinary ecclesiastical arrangements.

Now what is the system, and what is the machinery which these specimens shew us?

Apostles arranging for the maintenance of that three-fold order, which their Lord Himself had stamped upon the original constitution of their company.

By the direction or with the full concurrence of Apostles, men like James, and Timothy, and Titus, exercised authoritative superintendence over Presbyters and Deacons, as well as over the doctrine and worship of the Church.

(48). 2 Tim. i. 9.

(49). 2 Tim. ii. 2.

(50). Tit. i. 4-10.

(51). Tit. ii. 15.

(52). Tit. iii. 10.

The Book of the Apocalypse, which I believe to have been written about A.D. 95, is one to which I hardly like to refer; because I long to see it studied as it ought to be studied, and am unwilling to excite the prejudice of any against it by enlisting it in a controversy about Church government. There is such a peculiarity also about its style, that I do not like to lay stress upon the imagery employed in a particular vision, as if that were intended to witness to a fact in Church history. Yet my account of the Scriptural argument would be incomplete, if I did not at least allude to the vision described in the three first chapters.

There a cluster of seven churches in the west of Asia Minor is taken as a descriptive representation of the whole Church. Those Churches, therefore, are not exceptional, yet each one of them is addressed through an angel, who is treated as the representative of that Church, and responsible for its spiritual condition. Now, in the Church of Ephesus, which is one of these seven, we have proof that there were several ordained presbyters and deacons there. If the angel represents a human being at all, it is a man who is considered by Christ to be in charge of the whole Christian community there: a man like Timothy with authority over (and therefore responsible for) both clergy and people at Ephesus. This vision of these angels, therefore, seems to add six other places to the three in which we have already discovered the prelatic system.

But independently of every argument which rests on this, we have enough to enable us to declare that the ecclesiastical machinery which was established by S. Paul in the Island of Crete may safely be retained in the British Isles; that what was sanctioned by the apostles in the mother city of Jerusalem, and in the city of Ephesus, may be safely submitted to in Imperial Rome, and in such cities as Paris and Berlin, New York and S. Petersburg.



CHAPTER IX.

THE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE.

“**I** SUPPOSE this completes your argument from Scripture,” said Andrews.

“Yes; I think I have brought you down as far as it is possible for Scripture to bring you. I have shewn you from the Old Testament that unequal ranks and degrees in a sacred ministry are not in themselves displeasing to God, since they were established by His own arrangement in the older dispensation :—First, the High Priest, Secondly, the Priests, and Thirdly, the Levites.

I have shewn you from the Gospels that they are not in themselves out of harmony with the new dispensation, since our Lord Jesus Christ Himself appointed divers orders and degrees, even during His own personal ministry, when we could not have expected His Church to shew any regular system or organisation. The first company, or nucleus, out of which the Christian Church was afterwards developed, had already a threefold order in its staff of preachers; an order which corresponded to the gradations in the official staff under which the first Israel went up to the promised land : First, the Lawgiver, Secondly, the Twelve, Thirdly, the Seventy. And this same principle of a threefold organisation we found still engrained in the constitution of the Pentecostal Church : First, the Apostles, Secondly, the Elders, Thirdly, the Deacons.

And now I have shewn you this same principle continued as long as the Apostles lived, extended beyond

the persons of the original twelve, and arranged to last even when all who were called Apostles had passed away in death. These are last glimpses given us through that veil, which in the last days of the first century obscures our view of the Church's working. All these glimpses shew us the same threefold order still in the ministry of the Church. We see in the first and highest rank, such Apostles as were still surviving, James, the Lord's brother, at Jerusalem, Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus at Crete, all exercising superintendence over Church teaching and over the lower orders of the clergy. We find in a second rank, men who are called sometimes Elders or Presbyters, and sometimes Overseers, 'Episcopi,' or Bishops; and then below these we find a third order of men, who are called Servants or Deacons.

Surely I am not saying too much when I assert that the threefold order is proved by Holy Scripture to have been in the original constitution of that supernatural Society (or Church), which the Lord Jesus Christ established for the great purpose of teaching the world to receive and practise His blessed message.

And now bear this in mind: The very writings which state that this threefold ministry was established, warn us against revolutionising it, and against disobeying it. They command us plainly to submit ourselves to the existing authorities, saying, 'Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for souls as they that must give account' ⁽¹⁾. Is it conceivable that those who were reverently preserving these writings so recently entrusted to them, and who were handing them down as a sacred deposit and Divine legacy—is it conceivable that they were themselves the ringleaders of a conspiracy to revolutionise the ministry so endorsed and commended to the reverence of each disciple?

What more can you expect from Scripture than what I have already given you? First an historical

(1). Heb. xiii. 17.

account of the kind of ministry which was established in the Church ; and then an authoritative command in Scripture to submit to the ministry which we find established. This is Divine authority, not only for the existence of a threefold order in the Christian ministry, but also for reverent submission to it."

"But," said Andrews, "although you have spoken of the first rank as distinct from the other two, I am not quite sure that I see how far it was in these cases actually distinguished from them. Can you name any one particular power, which belonged so exclusively to the men of the first rank, that neither of the other two orders could exercise it?"

"I can. You may perhaps consider the authority to superintend the worship of the Church, and to guard the sacred deposit of the Christian faith, a thing not sufficiently definite to satisfy you. Because a certain amount of responsibility with regard to these belongs to each pastor as far as his own congregation is concerned, and may in a sense be said to belong to each disciple as far as his personal influence extends. But one rigidly defined distinction, which no observer can miss, lay in the authority to ordain. The first or highest rank alone had the power and responsibility of setting apart men, and giving them authority to execute any of the three offices of the Christian ministry."

"Was that really the case? Can you give us chapter and verse for it?"

"I can. The case of our Lord's own personal ministry is the first and simplest. In the Gospels you will find, that the only men set apart and authorised to preach the Gospel before the Resurrection, were the Twelve and the Seventy. Each of these two orders was called and appointed by the Lord Himself, who alone held the office of Chief Pastor and Bishop of His own flock⁽²⁾."

"Yes, except in the one instance of Matthias ; but

(2). John xiii. 13 ; 1 Pet. ii. 25.

he was elected by the general body of disciples, and ordained by the eleven."

"Elected by the general body of disciples? Ordained by the Apostles? Most certainly he was not. Like the rest of the Twelve, and like S. Paul and Barnabas, he also was chosen, not by man but by God; not by the Church, but by the Church's Lord and Master. The difference between the modes in which he and they were ordained was only this: that while the Lord's voice had been signified in the case of the original Twelve, by His own voice calling them and His own hands committing the trust to them, in this case it was expressed by the disposing of the lots in answer to prayer. The words of the prayer which preceded the casting of the lots ought to have saved you from this mistake. You remember what they were;—'Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of men, shew whether of these twain *Thou* hast chosen (3)."

"Yes, but that was only a decision between the two who had been already chosen by the popular vote."

"Do you mean to say that the disciples allowed their Lord only a casting vote but no original choice? Decidedly not. The necessities of the case and the requirements of the approaching crisis limited the number of candidates. The condition was named by S. Peter, as being his Lord's known intention, that the successor to Judas must be one who had companied with them for the entire space of the Personal Ministry; that is, from the Baptism of John until the Ascension. This condition reduced the number of eligible candidates to two;—Joseph, called Barsabas or Justus, and Matthias. These two they 'placed' (not 'chose,' as our English version has it), and of them the lot 'selected' Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles, having been chosen and appointed supernaturally by the action of the One Supreme Ruler of the Church (4).

(3). Acts i. 24.

(4). "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the

The case therefore remains as I have stated it. Before the Day of Pentecost no ordinations were made by either of the two inferior orders; the First and Chiefest Officer alone ordained both 'the Twelve' and 'the Seventy.'

The case of the Pentecostal Church is almost as clear. There are in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles only two instances of ordinary ordination to the ministry, so described as to shew who the ordainers were. And these are evidently recorded as specimen cases, one from each of two classes. The first of these is the ordination of Seven (Deacons) in the sixth chapter where the Apostles are expressly asserted to have ordained them by laying their hands on them after prayer⁽⁵⁾. The second case is recorded in the fourteenth chapter, where Paul and Barnabas are described as 'ordaining Presbyters in every city'; and these two are admitted to have been of apostolic rank⁽⁶⁾. There are, indeed, two other instances of the laying on of hands; but these are not instances of ordination to the ministry, but cases in which the recently-baptised were confirmed in the unity of the Church, in order to share in the Church's supernatural life. In both these cases the laying on of hands was by men of apostolic rank. The first was by S. Peter and S. John in Samaria, where 'through laying on of the Apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given'⁽⁷⁾. The second

disciples, and said, . . . 'Of these men which have accompanied with us *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that He was taken up from us*, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection. And they (the whole company) placed (*ἑστησαν*) two before the Lord as the whole company afterwards placed (*ἑστησαν*) seven before the Apostles. . . And they prayed and said, Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take [the] part of this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell . . ."—Acts i. 15-26.

(5). Acts vi. 6.

(6). Acts xiv. 14, 23.

(7). Acts viii. 18.

was that at Ephesus, where 'when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them' (8)."

"Ah! but you have forgotten the thirteenth chapter," said Andrews, "where we find 'certain prophets and teachers,' not only permitted, but expressly commanded by God to 'separate to Him Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto He had called them' (9). The names of these men are given, and we see that no one of them was an apostle, yet they laid their hands after prayer and fasting upon the heads of the two candidates, just as the apostles did in the case of the seven deacons."

"Quite true. I am glad you have mentioned that case, although it was not an instance of ordinary ordination, as I shall shew you. But it has been very frequently taken as an argument for Presbyterian ordination; that is, as a proof that ordinary Presbyters, alone, and without the help or sanction of any of a higher rank, have the right and power to ordain men and confer upon them the office of the Christian ministry. You yourself seem to quote it for this purpose, yet a few minutes' thought will shew you that it is an exceptional case, and corresponds with the appointment of Matthias in the first chapter.

In the first place, I say that, if it proves that three or four ordinary clergymen have the power of ordaining men without interference from any in a higher position than themselves, then it proves much more than this, and too much for any one. It proves that they have the power of making men apostles, as well

(8). Acts xix. 5, 6.

(9). "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed."—Acts xiii. 1-5.

as of admitting them into the same rank which themselves hold. If the office, which was conferred upon Barnabas and Saul by this laying on of hands, was the ministerial office which they afterwards exercised, then it was the office, not of ordinary Presbyters, but of extraordinary messengers of God. In other words, it was their apostleship which was so conferred, an office which S. Paul confidently maintained to be not a whit inferior to that held by the very chiefest apostles⁽¹⁰⁾.

If then, these 'prophets and teachers' are to be looked upon as ordinary Presbyters, and yet the ordainers of Paul and Barnabas, then two absurdities follow:—First, that ordinary Presbyters have the right of giving away an authority which they do not themselves possess; and Secondly, that S. Paul was stating a well-known falsehood, when he denied that his apostleship was conferred upon him by men⁽¹¹⁾.

But if we are to believe S. Paul (and I suppose we are), we must admit one of two things:—Either this work, for which they were thus separated by this laying on of hands, was only a temporary commission, like that which is described as having been previously fulfilled by them⁽¹²⁾; Or else (which I think more likely) this was an exceptional and supernatural separation, in which the human hands were used only as an outward sign of the heavenly hand of the Church's Lord, by which He here called these two as directly as He had called their thirteen⁽¹³⁾ predecessors in that supreme office.

That is one way of viewing this incident; and it rests upon the assumption that these 'prophets and teachers' were ordinary Presbyters. But now let us turn to examine this assumption. You are met at once by the statement that all of these five, whose

(10). 1 Cor. ix. 1-7.

(11). Gal. i. 1.

(12). Acts xii. 25.

(13). Including Judas and Matthias.

names are given in the first verse of this chapter, were 'prophets and teachers,' *Saul and Barnabas among the rest*. It is not possible for you to separate these two from the other three who laid on the hands, because they are not named apart; the name of Barnabas stands first upon the list, Simeon second, Lucius third, Manaen fourth, and Saul fifth. If now the ordainers are assumed to be Presbyters already ordained to the ministerial office, then this was a second ordination of Barnabas and Saul, to an office distinct from the ordinary office of the Christian ministry which they had previously possessed.

Conversely, if Barnabas and Saul were laymen previous to this ordination, and if the use of the words 'prophets and teachers' does not mark the ministerial office, then their class fellows were laymen also, and this stands as an instance not of Presbyterian but of lay ordination.

In no case therefore can it be taken as an ordinary admission of laymen into the ordinary ministerial office, by the mere laying on of the hands of those who held only the ordinary ministerial office. Whatever this was which was here conferred, it was conferred under the exceptional circumstance of a supernatural command, and the office conferred was either less, or else more than the ordinary office of Presbyter."

"That might be a lawful conclusion," he retorted, "if this passage stood alone, but I think I remember the expression somewhere, 'the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.'"

"You are quite right. It does occur in Scripture. You will find it in S. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy: 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery (or Presbyters)'⁽¹⁴⁾. This passage does indeed prove that Presbyters laid their hands on Timothy, at the time when the gift of which S. Paul is speaking was conveyed to him. But it does not say

(14). 1 Tim. iv. 14.

that no one of those Presbyters was in any way higher than the holder of what we now call the Presbyter's office. And another verse in the second epistle proves that S. Paul also laid his hands on Timothy on that occasion. And further, language used in this second passage makes out S. Paul's laying on of hands to have been the instrument by which, or through which, the gift was conveyed. The other action is spoken of rather as an accompaniment than as the means.

But even if you think this an undue straining of the force of the two prepositions 'by' and 'with,' it cannot be denied that S. Paul was one of the ordainers of Timothy; nor yet that at the ordination he took so prominent a part that he can without impropriety call it the laying on of *his* hands. For all we know, every one of the Presbytery may have been of Apostolic rank, for every Apostle was a Presbyter, although every Presbyter was not an Apostle. But when we find these two expressions used by S. Paul to the same person—'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy *with* the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery'; and 'Stir up the gift of God which is in thee *by* the laying on of my hands' ⁽¹⁵⁾—then the simplest inference is that S. Paul, although the authoritative ordainer, associated other holders of office with himself in his action, in order to shew that the ordination was the act of a body whom he and his Presbyters represented, and not the isolated action of a single individual.

From this, I believe, has been handed down the corresponding custom in the Church which you must have noticed. The ordaining Bishop always associates other Bishops with himself in conferring the office of the Episcopate, and other Presbyters in conferring the office of the Presbyterate, or Priesthood. Thus three other clergymen joined the Bishop of Down and Connor in laying hands upon my head, although I should

(15). See Chap. viii. p. 112, notes 38 and 39.

always speak of myself as having been ordained by the Bishop of Down."

"I see. Then is there really no recorded instance of any ordinary Presbyters having been ordained by Presbyters unassisted by a holder of a higher office?"

"There is not one. And in the face of this it would be a dangerous presumption to take for granted that they have that power, of which most certainly the Bible neither says they have it, nor records one solitary instance in which they exercised it. And this silence is rendered more impressive by the antagonistic records of three specimen cases, in which (1) a Superintendent⁽¹⁶⁾, (2) Presbyters⁽¹⁷⁾, and (3) Deacons⁽¹⁸⁾ were all ordained by men of the first (or apostolic) rank."

"Yes; but your proof is not yet complete. You have proved that, in the days of our Lord's personal ministry, the Holder of the first and chief rank alone exercised the right of sending men as 'labourers into the Lord's harvest.' You have shewn also that in the Pentecostal Church the Apostles alone ordained Presbyters, Deacons, and overseers like Timothy and Titus. But can you shew that the same rule was intended to hold good for superintendents who were not Apostles? for Timothy and Titus, for example? Can you shew that the right of sending labourers into the harvest, the authority to ordain, was committed to the superintendent or chief officer, rather than to the general body of Presbyters?"

"I can most distinctly. There were Presbyters, you remember, at Ephesus, ever since the first introduction of Christianity. Yet S. Paul says he left Timothy at Ephesus to preside over those Presbyters; and he gave his directions about Church worship, Church discipline, and ordination, to Timothy himself, and not to the Presbyters, nor even to Timothy and the Presbyters combined. The whole epistle is a personal epistle, and it gives this separate charge to Timothy, 'Lay

(16). 2 Tim. i. 6.

(17). Acts xiv. 23.

(18). Acts vi. 3-7.

hands suddenly on no man.' The verb there is in the second person singular number. 'Lay *thou* thy hands suddenly on no man.' This placed the laying on of hands so exclusively under the control of Timothy that, whether or not he associated others with himself in the actual performance of the ceremony, their presence sank into insignificance in comparison with his presence. It was from him and not from them that the commission and authority were to issue; and the ordination (or laying on of hands) would be always counted his, for which he (Timothy) would be held responsible⁽¹⁹⁾.

In the same way the charge in the second epistle is in the most marked way addressed to Timothy alone. 'Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that *thou* hast heard of *me*, the same commit *thou* to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others.' The distinction is, if possible, more clearly marked in the Epistle to Titus. There S. Paul says to him, 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that *thou* shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain (*i.e.*, that *thou* shouldst ordain) Presbyters in every city as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot, or unruly. For a Bishop must be blameless as the Steward of God'⁽²⁰⁾. Nothing can be plainer than that. Titus was himself given authority to ordain men to a post in which they would be entitled to be called Presbyters, Bishops, or Stewards of God, and therefore Ministers of Christ⁽²¹⁾. And Titus was authoritatively appointed to ordain such, by one who had been himself authorised so to appoint him 'according to the commandment of God our Saviour'⁽²²⁾.

(19). "Lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be thou partaker of other men's sin." (*χείρας ταχέως μηδενὶ ἐπιτίθει, μηδὲ κοινῶναι ἁμαρτίας ἄλλοτρίας*).—1 Tim. v. 22.

(20). Tit. i. 5, 6, 7.

(21). Compare 1 Cor. iv. 1.

(22). Tit. i. 3, compared with Acts xiii. 1-5.

Now, while we have distinct Scripture proof that the Apostles held a Divine commission from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and in virtue of that commission ordained men to all the offices of the Christian ministry, and authorised those whom they set in the chief places to ordain others, and pass the authority on; we have no one instance in the whole New Testament of any number of mere Presbyters venturing to ordain anyone, except under the personal superintendence of someone higher than themselves, as in Timothy's case, or under the supernatural interference of the great Head of the Church Himself as at Antioch. So whatever you may think of this Scriptural evidence for Episcopal ordination, at least no one can offer better for any other mode of ordaining. Nor can anyone give a single statement from any part of Holy Scripture denouncing Episcopacy, warning the Church against it, or even hinting that these apparent precedents which I have shewn you are not to be followed."

"How then do Presbyterians attempt to prove their own system of ordination from Scripture?"

"By trying to pick holes in the positive arguments which we advance. They try to show that our arguments are not quite conclusive, and that it is still possible that Presbyters might, in some cases of which we are not told, have ordained without the superintendence of a superior.

But it ought to be considered very seriously that, if they do succeed in destroying all proof of authority of our Bishops to ordain, they can shew no authority at all as plausible; and the result of their success will be only this: That the Church will appear to have been left without any Divine or apostolic authority for any ministry at all, after the Apostles and their immediate followers were taken away from the earth."

"But how do they attempt to shake the arguments that you have drawn from the positions occupied by S. James, Timothy, and Titus?"

"They say that these were all very exceptional characters, appointed with exceptional authority, and that they are never to be imitated. That means, however, that the Holy Ghost has carefully preserved for us full descriptions of the only specimens of Church government which are not to be copied; and that He has allowed every one of the cases which are to be copied to pass out of sight and be forgotten."

"Is there any shadow of argument in Scripture for that most monstrous assumption, which really sounds like a charge against the Holy Spirit of suppression of the truth and distortion of the real facts?"

"Only that S. James was a very exceptional man, being the Lord's brother; and that Ephesus and Crete must have been very exceptional places, Ephesus being in danger of 'grievous wolves'⁽²³⁾, and the Cretans 'always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies'⁽²⁴⁾. There might have been some plausibility in this last statement. But unfortunately before they have got well through their argument from it, they rush on to destroy it, by pointing out that Timothy was not absolutely tied to Ephesus, for S. Paul called him afterwards to Rome⁽²⁵⁾; and that Titus was not left permanently at Crete, for we hear of him afterwards in Dalmatia⁽²⁶⁾.

If these last assertions are proved, they shew that these two were solemnly appointed by prophecy and the laying on of hands for an office of chief pastor, which was to be exercised, not only at the exceptional places of Ephesus and Crete, but elsewhere also.

However, I have shewn you already that these places, which they think exceptional, are really (what we should have expected the inspired historian to have selected) good specimen cases for exhibiting Church work. He shews us the same system at work in a city exceptionally favoured like Jerusalem; a city once specially favoured by the special labours of S. Paul, but afterwards to be specially endangered by false

(23). Acts xx. 29.

(25). 2 Tim. iv. 9.

(24). Tit. i. 12.

(26). 2 Tim. v. 10.

teachers; and in an island specially unfortunate from the character of its inhabitants. A system which is suited to such varied circumstances may surely be generally adopted.

But now let us turn to examine the three specimen men, who are brought before us as chief governors in these three specimen cases. We find that one of them was an Hebrew, of Hebrew parentage by both sides, of the tribe of Judah, and 'brother of our Lord.' We find that the second was the son of a Jewish woman who believed, while his father was a Greek, and himself admitted to the covenant only as an adult⁽²⁷⁾. We turn to enquire into the parentage of the third, and we find that he was a Gentile by both sides, a Greek whom S. Paul refused to have circumcised⁽²⁸⁾. Again, I say, a system which suits men of such varied antecedents and surroundings, must surely strike us as likely to be generally useful. We feel that, instead of fraudulently-selected cases, these are really divinely-chosen specimens; and that they may be fully trusted as signposts, to shew the mode in which the Apostles handed on the sacred office and deposit, which they themselves had received at the hands of the Divine Lord."

"Is there, then, no foundation at all for their exclusion of the two cases of Timothy and Titus?"

"No solid foundation. Sometimes, indeed, they lay stress upon the use of the word 'Evangelist' in S. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy⁽²⁹⁾. They assume, in the first place, that this title was at that time rigidly confined to one clearly-defined office, and never applied to any but the holder of that office. They then assume further, that this office was created for cases so exceptional, that it was right to give to him who held it an authority over other Christian ministers which it

(27). Acts xvi. 1, 3.

(28). Gal. ii. 3-5.

(29). "Do the work of an evangelist: make full proof of thy ministry."—2 Tim. iv. 5.

would have been unchristian to have given generally. And from these two assumptions they argue that these words must mean that Timothy had been given this exceptional office, and therefore that his case forms no precedent for the bishops of ordinary times.

In answer to this, I may remark :—First, that, even if this could be proved, it would only set Timothy on one side, and leave us with S. James and Titus still ; and Secondly, that these assumptions are most preposterous and evidently the last efforts of a dying cause. For, at that early date none of the ecclesiastical titles were rigidly fixed ; they were all used vaguely, now for one rank, then for another. And they who refuse to allow us to bring forward the presence of the three titles, Bishop, Elder, and Deacon, in the Bible, as an argument in our favour, ought to be the very last to rest their cause upon this undefined use of the word ‘evangelist.’ Then, Thirdly, their assertions about it are strikingly inconsistent with the literal meaning of the word, which is a ‘teller of good news’ ; and quite opposed to the use which is made of it elsewhere in Scripture. The verb ‘evangelise’ is used of every telling of the good news of the Gospel to those who had not heard it before, whether by Apostles⁽³⁰⁾, by Deacons⁽³¹⁾, or by lay people⁽³²⁾. In the only case in which it is applied to an individual as a distinguishing title it is applied to Philip who still ranked only as one of ‘the Seven,’ and who had been ordained into an order of the ministry which had no special superintendence except over Church finance. It is applied to him because he had the opportunity of being the first to announce the good news of salvation to the Samaritans⁽³³⁾. So, even if it is applied as a title to Timothy, who had been ordained to rule the whole Church of Ephesus with all its Presbyters and Deacons, this shews merely that it was not then used to define any distinct ecclesiastical office. The most simple interpretation

(30). Mark xvi. 15.

(31). Acts viii. 35.

(32). Acts viii. 4.

(33). Acts xx. 8.

of the clause is that it marks one especial item in the entire work of the ministry, to which S. Paul wished to direct Timothy's special attention. He was not merely to rule the Church and feed its members, but he was also to tell the news to those who had not yet heard it, that is, to evangelise them, and so to make full proof of his ministry.

And now I think I may end at last this long search through the inspired writings. Although their silence would have been a sufficient confirmation of what all Church history tells us (34), we have not been left with mere silence. We find the threefold order of the Christian ministry stamped upon the constitution of the Church when she came forth from the Divine Council-room. We find this order expanding itself so naturally with the expanding Church that its growth is almost imperceptible. When we turn to the records of the second and third centuries, we shall be conscious of no shock, no semblance of a revolution, only a fuller development of what we have already noticed in the Church's infancy and childhood.

Next week, if you will consent to listen to me again, I shall shew you how completely the few writings which have come down to us from the first centuries harmonise with what we have already learned ; and how they bridge over the dark chasm, that is said to lie between the inspired record and the first undoubted facts in the Church's later history.

(34). See above, Chap. v. p. 61.



Third Part.



THE ARGUMENT FROM HISTORY.





CHAPTER X.

THE HISTORIES OF HEGESIPPUS AND EUSEBIUS.

WHEN we next met, I said to my two friends, "I am sure you are relieved to hear that our work is coming to an end at last. I have shown you that Episcopacy is not the extravagant luxury which some people think it, but the very root of our whole system of Church government⁽¹⁾; good economically⁽²⁾; and thoroughly practicable and reasonable; harmonising with all our experience of systems and governments, and well calculated to give compact strength to any Church or society that retains or adopts it⁽³⁾. This is one mode of defending Episcopacy, from its own natural fitness for its purpose.

Again, I shewed you that Episcopacy is no modern invention, but a system which has come down to us from a time so distant that, unless we look very carefully into the most ancient writings, its beginning seems lost in obscurity.

We looked at the obscurity that lies about the birth of the Episcopal system, and we saw that the simplest and most natural explanation of all the admitted facts of history is, that the three-fold ministry has come down naturally and regularly from the first originating of the Christian Church⁽⁴⁾.

This is a second mode of defending Episcopacy, and it in no way depends upon the first, but keeps its full force whether the first mode stands or falls.

(1). Chap. I.

(2). Chap. II.

(3). Chap. III.

(4). Chap. IV.

We then turned to the Bible to see whether there was anything in it that would upset either or both of these two lines of argument. Instead of any contradiction of them, we found two additional and distinct arguments in favour of Episcopacy. In the first place, we found from the Old Testament that all God's dealings with His covenanted people implied the innocence and fitness of a prelatic system (that is, of ranks and distinctions within a sacred ministry). The existence of the three orders of high-priest, priest, and Levite in the ministry of the Old Covenant shewed that a similar division in the ministry of the New Covenant would not be in itself an evil, nor out of harmony with the will of God ⁽⁵⁾. Here was an independent confirmation of all our arguments from our own experience, and a strong inducement to persuade us to remain satisfied with what we had inherited from the most ancient times.

From this we passed on, you will remember, to the New Testament ⁽⁶⁾; and there we found the germ of our three-fold ministry in the arrangements of the little company, or mustard-seed, which was afterwards developed into the great tree which is now filling all the earth ⁽⁷⁾.

After the Day of Pentecost was fully come, and the Church of Christ fairly started upon her world-wide work, we found this principle more marked and developed. We found the three-fold order—Apostles, Elders, Deacons—everywhere at work, to the very end of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

We found inspired letters also from S. Paul, shewing how he had extended the three-fold order in certain specimen cases, and directing the Superintendents, whom he had ordained over Presbyters and Deacons, to execute their office, whether he (their ordainer) lived or died in the storm which was just about to burst upon him ⁽⁸⁾. This was a fourth line of argu

(5). Chap. v.

(6). Chap. vi.

(7). Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

(8). Chaps. vii, viii, ix.

ment, and a fourth defence of our Prelatic or Episcopal system. It shews that, whether the system seems costly or economical, reasonable or unreasonable in our eyes, it was actually part of the original and supernatural constitution of the Church of Christ. Therefore this alone (supposing the three former lines of argument were forgotten or disproved) is enough to warrant our appeal to every disciple of Christ to hold fast the inheritance which has come to us from His loving hands, and which God's providence has wonderfully preserved to us through all the changes and chances of the last eighteen hundred years.

Nothing further is now really needed, yet I should very much like to call your attention to another most satisfactory circumstance. It is this, that the only Church histories which have come down to us from men who lived in the second and third centuries, tell us that the Church system which prevailed in their time came regularly down to them from the Apostles. This, however, in no way affects the force of any of the four lines of argument which I have already given to you. But it comes in as a completely separate and independent confirmation of what has been already proved."

"Are there any Church histories which have come down to us from such ancient times?"

"Yes; there are two. The earliest we possess is that of Hegesippus, who took an active interest in Church work at Corinth and at Rome in the end of the second century. About the year of our Lord 160, he wrote an ecclesiastical history in five books, in which he gave the history of the Church from the crucifixion of our Lord, in the year A.D. 33, down to his own time (9). This history, however, we have only in literal extracts, which are very largely given by the next historian, the earliest whose works remain uninjured. This next writer is Eusebius, who was born

(9). Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, iv. 22.

A.D. 270 (less than two hundred years after the death of the last Apostle), and who died A.D. 340.

Now, it is so notorious that both these writers believed and asserted that Episcopacy came down from our Lord and His apostles, that this has never been disputed.

Some, indeed, have tried to account for it by saying that this shows their ignorance. 'The revolution which upset the primitive simplicity of ministerial equality had taken place before this, and they had never noticed it.' 'Episcopacy was so fully established in Eusebius' time, that it never occurred to him to suspect that the original system was so different.' 'Hegesippus, perhaps, did not really mean' what his words seem to mean, and what every one of those who lived nearest to his time always thought he did mean. One Presbyterian writer, whose character and labours give great weight to his opinion upon Church History, has so strangely missed the natural inference from Eusebius' records of the successions of Bishops from the Apostles' times, that he actually brings these forward as proofs of his worthlessness as a historian. He is so indignant with him for not recording that Presbyterianism was the original system, and Episcopacy only a later invention, that he treats his whole history with contempt on that account. Here is what he says about Eusebius:—

'The publication by which he is best known would never have acquired such celebrity had it not been the most ancient treatise of the kind in existence. Though it mentions many of the ecclesiastical transactions of the second and third centuries, and supplies a large amount of information which would otherwise have been lost, it must be admitted to be a very ill-arranged and most unsatisfactory performance. Its author does not occupy a high position either as a philosophic thinker, a judicious observer, or a sound theologian. He makes no attempt to point out the germs of error, to illustrate the rise and progress of

ecclesiastical changes, or to investigate the circumstances which *led to the formation of the hierarchy*. Even the announcement of his preface, that *his purpose is 'to record the succession of the holy Apostles,'* or in other words, to *exhibit some episcopal genealogies*, proclaims how much he was mistaken as to the topics which should have been noticed most prominently in his narrative' (10)."

"Is that what Eusebius says," asked Hazlewood. "No wonder that writer thinks him most unsatisfactory. Instead of telling who invented Episcopacy, to write a book to shew how it came down from the Apostles! There certainly has been a terrible mistake made by some one: either by the Apostles in establishing the three-fold ministry, or by Eusebius in saying they did, or possibly by this modern historian in taking for granted (eighteen hundred years afterwards) that they did not establish it."

"But are we to understand," said Andrews, "that Eusebius, the earliest of all extant historians of the Church, has asserted the continuous succession of the Episcopate from the apostles' times?"

"Most certainly you are. You cannot have any doubt about it. Here is his book. Look even at the table of contents. Book iii. c. 4—'On the first successors of the Apostles;' c. ii.—'How Simeon, after James, ruled the Church in Jerusalem;' c. 15—'How Clement was the third Bishop of the Romans;' c. 22—'How Ignatius was the second who ruled the Church of the Antiochenes.' Book iv. c. 1—'The Bishops of the Romans and Alexandrians during the reign of Trajan.' And so on, and so on. Yes, it is admitted on all hands that Eusebius' history, *if we are to believe it*, proves that Episcopacy was regularly handed down in the Church from the Apostles' times to the beginning of the fourth century. The only possible answer to it is to say, 'Well, but we do not believe it.' Still,

(10). Killen's *Ancient Church*, period ii., sec. ii., chap. vi., p. 523.

here is a fact which stares us in the face, and ought at least to count 'one' upon our side. Eusebius had (it is admitted on all sides) admirable opportunities for discovering the facts of the case; and, though we do not claim for him that he was a valuable philosopher or theologian, he was quite capable of using those opportunities well, if he chose to do so. He has used them at least so well that no one else of his time has surpassed him, and we have hardly any positive authority for the history of the first two centuries, except from what has come to us through the pages of Eusebius.

Now, it is an argument of very great weight upon our side, that this writer not only asserts the apostolic origin of Episcopacy, and *writes for the very purpose of shewing it*, but never seems in all his reading and inquiry to have come across a reasonable doubt upon the subject. Of course, men may say that he was prejudiced and untruthful; but even so, he could hardly have helped betraying some consciousness of the real facts, if it were only by denying them, or arguing against them, and this consciousness could not but have shewed itself in so unartistic an arrangement as Dr. Killen thinks his history is ⁽¹¹⁾.

(11). The inferiority of the critical faculty in the first five centuries is acknowledged by us. But it ought to be remembered that the great instrument by which the critical faculty of the present day has been developed is controversy. The very absence of this faculty, therefore, and the strange credulity with which earlier historians accepted all statements which came to hand upon certain subjects, prove the general belief of the time. At the very lowest, the two histories of Hegesippus and Eusebius ought to stand as undeniable proofs, that at the time they wrote there was no serious doubt as to the apostolic origin of the Episcopate. But others, equally opposed to our views as to the Christian ministry, speak very differently from Dr. Killen about Eusebius. Thus, Donaldson says, "My first, my best, and almost my only authority is Eusebius He was devotedly attached to the study of the earlier writers; he had ample opportunities; and he was capable of using them well . . . Eusebius did his work well; and his history became henceforth the standard book on the subject. All subsequent writers have simply

Another argument is drawn from the large and valuable extracts which Eusebius has given us from the history written by Hegesippus. In these extracts Hegesippus (who was born not more than about thirty years after the death of the last Apostle) states most distinctly that in several cities the Bishop's office was handed down from the Apostles ; and he gives as the result of his own careful searches the actual lists of names. Here, then, is the best (because the earliest) historical evidence of the second and third centuries, and it tells us that what we have already inferred from other sources is the actual fact. The possession of the three orders of the Christian ministry, which has always been so marked a feature in the Church of Christ, came down with it from its first foundation, and shares the Apostolic and Divine authority of the Church itself.

If I take the case of the city of Jerusalem, you will see at once how satisfactorily these two histories bridge over the dark interval which lies between the last inspired writing and the universally admitted facts of Church history.

We have seen that the Bible speaks of S. James, the Lord's brother, as holding in Jerusalem the marked position of authority, which belongs to the Episcopate, and this in the presence and with the sanction of the whole body of the Apostles.

Hegesippus, writing just one hundred years later, gives an account of his martyrdom, and says: 'And after the martyrdom of James the Just, his cousin, Symeon, the son of Clopas, was appointed bishop, whom all put forward as next bishop, because he was a cousin of the Lord. On this account they called the Church a virgin, because it was not yet corrupted by idle words. But Thebuthis began now secretly to corrupt it, because of his not being made bishop'⁽¹²⁾.

repeated his statements, sometimes indeed misrepresenting them."
—*The Apostolical Fathers*, by James Donaldson, LL.D.

(12). Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, iv. 22.

This gives us the authority of Hegesippus for teaching, not only that S. James was the first bishop at Jerusalem, as he states elsewhere⁽¹³⁾; but also that Symeon was his successor, appointed during the lifetime of some apostles, at an election in which he had at least one discontented competitor; so that his post could not have been a mere position of seniority held naturally by the eldest.

Of Symeon's successors, Eusebius gives us a complete list which brings us down to the time of Hadrian⁽¹⁴⁾. And his statement is very clear as to the nature of that episcopate to which James was appointed, and in which the rest succeeded him⁽¹⁵⁾.

Take now the city of Rome, where any serious change made in the original system of Church government must surely have attracted someone's attention, and raised some amount of controversy, to which some writer would have alluded.

Hegesippus was himself in the city of Rome, and wrote his history about a hundred years after S. Paul's first visit there. He says: 'And the Church of the Corinthians remained orthodox until the episcopate of Primus in Corinth, with which Church I became acquainted on my way to Rome, and spent with the Corinthians many days in which we refreshed ourselves in orthodoxy. But when I was in Rome I made out the succession down to Anicetus, whose Deacon was Eleutherus. After Anicetus, Soter succeeded, and after him Eleutherus. And in each succession, and in each city, things are as the law and the prophets and the

(13). Διαδέχεται δὲ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ὁ ἀδελφὸς τοῦ κυρίου Ἰάκωβος.—Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, ii. 23.

(14). 1, James. 2, Symeon, 3, Justus, 4, Zacchaeus, 5, Tobias, 6, Benjamin, 7, John, 8, Matthias, 9, Philip, 10, Seneca, 11, Justus, 12, Levi, 13, Ephraim, 14, Joseph, 15, Judas.—Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, iv. 5.

(15). Τοῦτον δὲ τὸν Ἰάκωβον ὃν καὶ Δίκαιον ἐπὶ κληρὸν κ.τ.λ. πρῶτον ἱστοροῦσι τῆς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐκκλησίας τὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐγγχειρισθῆναι θρόνον.—Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, ii. 1.

Lord command' (16). His statement being made in proof of the orthodoxy of the Churches of which he is writing, his list of the succession, to have been worth anything, must have been made out from the Apostles' times. Otherwise it would not have proved that the Customs superintended by those succeeding bishops had been regularly handed down from the Apostles.

Eusebius afterwards gives lists which are apparently the ones referred to here. He says, 'Linus was the first who obtained the episcopate of the Church of the Romans, after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul. Paul mentions him when writing to Timothy from Rome.' (17) In another place he says, 'In the second year of the reign of Trajan (*i.e.*, A.D. 99), Linus, Bishop of the Church of the Romans, after holding the office for twelve years, surrendered it to Anencletus.' Again, 'Clement succeeded Anencletus, who presided as Bishop over the Church of the Romans for twelve years. He was the Clement to whom Paul referred in his Epistle to the Philippians, 'With Clement also and other my fellow-workers whose names are in the Book of life.' (18)

A strong confirmation of this last statement by Eusebius is given by a letter, which was written to the Corinthians in the name of the Church of Rome. It is in a very simple and unassuming style, and the writer's name is nowhere mentioned in it. Yet it would have been unseemly for him to have expressed himself as he

(16). Γενόμενος δὲ ἐν Ῥώμῃ, διαδοχὴν ἐποιησάμην μέχρι Ἀνικήτου, ὃς διάκονος ἦν Ἐλεούθερος (Euseb. H. E., iv. 22). Eleutherus apparently acted in some measure as our Archdeacon, as the 'oculus episcopi.'—See chap. i. p. 9.

(17). Τῆς δὲ Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας μετὰ τὴν Παύλου καὶ Πέτρου μαρτυρίαν πρῶτος κληροῦται τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν Λίνος. κ.τ.λ.—Euseb., iii. 2.

(18). Λίνος ἐπίσκοπος τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας, δυοκάδεκα τὴν λειτουργίαν ἐνιαυτοῖς κατασχὼν Ἀνεγκλήτῳ ταύτην παραδίδωσι.—(Eusebius' *Eccles. History*, iii. 13). Τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας Ἀνεγκλήτων ἔτεσιν ἐπισκοπεύσαντα δεκαδύο διαδέχεται Κλήμης.—Euseb. H. E., iii. 15.

does in it, unless he knew himself to be in a position that authorised him to represent the Church of Rome. And it is generally agreed that he, who was at that time authorised to represent it, and who did write this letter, was its Bishop, Clement. This letter, indeed, makes no mention of any bishop as then residing at Corinth; and a fair inference from this silence is, that there was no bishop in charge of the Church at Corinth at that time; or that the particular bishop there was one whose name would add no force to S. Clement's words or arguments; or else, that this letter was sent (possibly at that bishop's request) to enforce independently the behaviour at Corinth which their bishop had himself been trying to enforce. Still, no one of those inferences is necessarily opposed to the belief that Episcopacy was the established system throughout the Church, whether or not a bishop had yet been found to take charge of Corinth. And that Episcopacy was not an unknown thing there is proved by the fact that the writer of S. Clement's First Epistle to the Corinthians was in an authoritative and representative (and therefore episcopal) position at Rome. It is in support of this that I introduce the mention of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. But since I have mentioned it, I shall call your attention to a passage in it about which much has been written.

He is appealing to the Christians at Corinth to desist from their resistance to certain clergy, and to submit themselves. In the course of this appeal occurs the following passage. After laying down the law that all things are to be done in order and in their appointed season, he says:—'They, therefore, who make their offerings at the appointed times are both accepted and blessed; for following their Lord's commands they transgress not. For to the High Priest his own proper acts of service have been given; and to the priests their own position has been assigned; and the Levites are responsible for their own ministrations: the layman is bound by the rules for the laity. Let each of

you, brethren, in his own order offer thanks to God, preserving a good conscience, not transgressing the prescribed rule for his own act of service, in a spirit of reverence. Not in every place, brethren, are offered sacrifices of continuance⁽¹⁹⁾, or of supplications, or for sins of transgression and omission, but only in Jerusalem. And even there the offering is not made in every place, but before the temple at the altar, the sacrifice having been first diligently inspected by the High Priest and the officers whom I have mentioned above.

Ye see, brethren, in proportion as we were thought worthy of a higher knowledge than they, in that proportion do we incur a greater danger. The Apostles preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ from God. Christ, therefore, was sent from God, and the Apostles from Christ; therefore, both things were done in due order by the will of God. Having, therefore, received commandments and been fully equipped by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and having been confirmed by the word of God, they went forth with full assurance of the Holy Spirit, preaching that the kingdom of God was about to come. Preaching, therefore, through country districts and towns, they appointed the first-fruits of their labours, after proving them by the Spirit, Bishops and Deacons for those who were about to believe. Nor was this any new thing; for of old time it was written concerning Bishops and Deacons. For so says the Scripture in a certain place, 'I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.' He then reminds them of the steps which Moses took to settle the contention about the priestly caste, and proceeds, 'Our Apostles also knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife concerning the name of the episcopate. For this reason, therefore, having received perfect fore-

(19). *Θυσίαι ἐνδελχισμοῦ*. The daily sacrifices, I suppose, which were offered continually.

knowledge of it, they appointed those whom I have mentioned, and afterwards gave an order of succession that when they fell asleep other approved men should succeed to their ministry' ⁽²⁰⁾.

I have given you the entire passage that you may judge of it for yourselves. Some quote it as a proof that Clement insisted upon the threefold ministry, Apostles, Bishops (or Presbyters) and Deacons. These commentators account for his silence about such superintendents as Timothy, Titus, and others, by the early date of his epistle. He does not consider that the Apostles have yet entirely passed away, or left their order unrepresented. And the more honourable of the two names held by the second order, has not yet been appropriated to such superintendents as were not Apostles. Others, however, quote the passage as decisive against Episcopacy. They say that, if the writer knew that there were to be three orders in the ministry, after the original Apostles had been removed, his silence in this epistle about that arrangement is quite unaccountable.

Now it might be a sufficient answer to these last to say that Clement had been too much concerned with the immediate present to give any direction about the future. But, granting everything that our opponents demand as to the meaning of any part of this passage, it is quite clear that its writer is quite unaware of any controversy upon the subject. He never could have written in this way about orders in the ministry—naming two orders as instituted by a third, and introducing a double reference to the number 'three,' (first by his mention of the High Priest, Priest, and Levite, and secondly, by his mentioning God and Jesus Christ, and the Apostles),—if he knew of any controversy whether the Christian ministry was twofold or threefold ; or if he knew that a ministerial parity (as it is called) was of the very essence of the Gospel. Nor can he have had the smallest suspicion

(20). 1 Clement ad Cor., xl-xliv.

that the position which he himself then occupied at Rome was at all out of harmony with the constitution of the ministry which he described.

Still further, Clement claims here for the Apostles that they had 'received perfect foreknowledge of the dissension which would afterwards rise about the name of the episcopate.' Is it not strange if, with this perfect foreknowledge, they themselves appointed two distinct orders in the Christian ministry, and never gave a hint which reached the ears of S. Paul's fellow-labourer that the Church must guard against the creation of a third order? never gave a hint that it would be dangerous to think of the number 'three' in reference to the Christian ministry? nor ever raised a suspicion that the position which Clement occupied at Rome might be a dangerous precedent? On any interpretation, therefore, this passage is certainly not a refutation of the direct statements of Hegesippus and Eusebius.

I may add that Irenæus, who was born A.D. 135 and died A.D. 202, and therefore wrote about the same time as Hegesippus, gives the following list of the Bishops of Rome: 'Linus, Anencletus, Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, Xystus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Eleutherius.' And he tells us that he gives this list in order to shew how regularly the Apostles' teaching has been handed down in the Church to his own time ⁽²¹⁾.

Here we have the authority of the very earliest historians for the statement, that Episcopacy was handed regularly down from the Apostles, in the two conspicuous Churches of Rome and Jerusalem. And though some are now, at this distance of time, casting doubts upon their authority, no one has yet succeeded in bringing forward any positive statements on the other side. No statement can be advanced from any

(21). Τῇ αὐτῇ τάξει καὶ τῇ αὐτῇ διδαχῇ ἥ τε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ παράδοσις καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας κήρυγμα κατήντηκεν εἰς ἡμᾶς.—Iren. iii. 3, 3 (quoted Eus. H. E., v. 6).

writing of the second century, which asserts that the distinction between the offices in the Christian ministry did not come down from the Apostles; nor any which asserts that it was the invention of any ambitious Presbyter or Deacon.

I could give you similar statements as to Episcopacy in Antioch, of which Euodius is said to have been appointed bishop by S. Peter;⁽²²⁾ and where Ignatius is treated by all ancient historians as having succeeded to the bishopric at so early a date that his martyrdom was not later than A.D. 116. If any at all of his letters are admitted to be genuine—and the majority of the learned are in favour of seven—but if even the shorter forms of the three epistles, for which some contend, be the only ones that are genuine, there is at least one passage that asserts the authority of the Episcopate, 'Give heed to the Bishop, that God may give heed to you. I love as my own soul those who submit to the Bishop, Presbyters, and Deacons.'⁽²³⁾ The successor of Ignatius is believed to have been Hero, and from his time onward the list of Bishops at Antioch is complete.⁽²⁴⁾ Take Corinth, and we have the statement already quoted from Hegesippus, that, when he passed through it on his way to Rome, Primus was then the Bishop of Corinth; and he states that until his days Corinth had remained orthodox, and had enjoyed a succession of Bishops from the Apostles.⁽²⁵⁾ A few years afterwards Dionysius was Bishop of Corinth; and Eusebius tells us that Dionsyius wrote, that his namesake the Areopagite, having been brought to the faith by the Apostle Paul, according to the Acts of the Apostles, was 'the first to be entrusted with the Bishopric of the Diocese of the Athenians.'⁽²⁶⁾ Again, the same

(22). Euseb. H. E., iii. 22.

(23). Ep. ad Polyc. 6.

(24). Euseb. H. E., iii. 36; iv. 20.

(25). See above, p. 142.

(26). *πρῶτος τῆς ἐν Ἀθῆναις παρῳκίας τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ ἐγκει-
ριστο.*—Euseb. H. E., iv. 23.

Dionysius wrote to the Athenians, and reminded them how, 'after the martyrdom of Publius, "their ruler,"⁽²⁷⁾ Quadratus sustained the courage and stimulated the faith of the Athenian brotherhood.'⁽²⁸⁾ Now, as Lightfoot observes,⁽²⁹⁾ if Quadratus were he who presented an apology to the Emperor Hadrian about 130 A.D., then the martyrdom of Publius must have been in an early part of this century, yet he is called their 'ruler' in the most natural way possible. Again, the earliest mention which we find made of Christianity in Crete, and Thrace, and Gaul, is in each case connected with Episcopacy as an existing fact.⁽³⁰⁾ Indeed, Episcopacy is such a characteristic feature of the Church of Christ everywhere in the second century, that even so cautious a writer as Canon Lightfoot thinks the distinction between the ranks of Bishop and Presbyter is noticed in a letter from the heathen Emperor Hadrian⁽³¹⁾.

The name of Africa hardly occurs in the ancient writings, until we come to the days of Tertullian, who wrote in the end of the second century; but at once a whole flood of light is thrown by his vehement out-speaking upon the subject of Church government. He lays immense stress upon Episcopacy as a divine institution, and also upon the unbroken succession of Bishops, as being the visible guarantee for the uncorrupted purity of the doctrines taught in their churches. And he challenges the heretics to shew anything like this line of superintendents, guarding the sacred deposit once committed to them by the Apostles.⁽³²⁾

(27). τὸν προεστῶτα.

(28). Euseb. H. E., iv. 23.

(29). Ep. to Philip. p. 215.

(30). Euseb. H. E., iv. 19, 23, 25.

(31). "I have become perfectly familiar with Egypt, which you praised to me; it is fickle, uncertain, blown about by every gust of rumour. Those who worship Serapis are Christians, and those are devoted to Serapis who call themselves Bishops of Christ. There is no ruler of a synagogue there, no Samaritan, no Christian Presbyter, who is not an astrologer, a soothsayer, a quack."—Vopiscus *Vit. Saturn.* 8.

(32). "Edant origines Ecclesiarum suarum, evolvant ordinem

I am quite conscious that the line I am now taking may give an impression against me. You are in danger of forgetting that I am at the very darkest part of history, and that the references to the office of the superintending Bishop which I am giving, are taken only as to the times and places about which there is most obscurity. My line of argument from history went on the supposition that there was not one single hint in our favour from the records of this period; and these are all proofs of supererogation, quotations made to shew you that the darkness is not so absolutely profound as has been asserted, and that what light there is harmonises with the clearer view which we have upon each side of this period. It is, therefore, a very decided strengthening of my strong case that even from these few writings we can prove that, before the end of the second century, as far as Christianity had spread, in France and Italy, Greece, Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, Palestine, Crete, Egypt, and the African coast—everywhere Episcopacy had spread along with it, and was treated as an essential part of what had been handed down by the Apostles, and as a characteristic feature of Christianity.

I shall add only one other historical fact; but it is a very important one. S. John, the beloved disciple, was the last survivor of the Apostles. He watched the Church of Christ through the great convulsion of the fall of Jerusalem and the last scattering of the Jews. He exercised special superintendence over the Church in Asia Minor; and the Lord's last message was delivered through him to seven specimen Churches in

Episcoporum suorum, ita per successiones ab initio decurrentem ut primus ille Episcopus aliquem ex Apostolis, vel Apostolicis viris qui tamen cum Apostolis perseveraverit, habuerit auctorem et antecessorem. Hoc enim modo Ecclesiæ apostolicæ census suos deferunt: sicut Smyrnæorum Ecclesia Polycarpum ab Joanne collocatum refert; sicut Romanorum Clementem a Petro ordinatum edit; proinde utique et ceteræ exhibent quos ab apostolis in episcopatum constitutos apostolici seminis traduces habeant.”—*Tertullian de præscript. Hæret.* c. 32.

that country, somewhere about the year A.D. 95.

If Episcopacy was a human invention, unapproved by the Apostles, if it was a corruption of the original simplicity of the Church system, Asia Minor ought to have been of all places the most secure from this addition, the very last to have been corrupted by it. Yet there is no part of Christendom about which we have stronger evidence for its early existence. We have seen what the epistles to Timothy and the Apocalypse have to tell about it. Now let us come to other writings. Polycarp was a pupil of S. John, and shews, in the one letter which we have of his, no trace whatever of personal ambition, or even of great strength of character. Yet that very letter shews him to have been—what his own Church just after his martyrdom asserts him to have been—Bishop of the Church in Smyrna. In his greeting to his readers he clearly distinguishes himself from his own Presbyters, very much as S. James was distinguished from his at Jerusalem⁽³³⁾. His words are: ‘Polycarp and the Presbyters who are with him to the Church of God which sojourneth in Philippi, mercy to you and peace from God Omnipotent and Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour be multiplied’⁽³⁴⁾. The shorter forms of the three letters of Ignatius call Polycarp bishop, in the sense in which we now use the title, and speak of bishops of other towns in Asia Minor beside this one⁽³⁵⁾; and this within twenty years after S. John’s death. Irenæus, writing towards the end of the second century, speaks of himself as Bishop of Ephesus, and tells us that he was the eighth holder of that office, having been preceded by seven⁽³⁶⁾. Then we

(33). “We went unto James and all the Elders were present.”—Acts xxi. 18.

(34). Πολύκαρπος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ πρεσβύτεροι. κ.τ.λ. Συνεχάρην ὑμῶν.—Pol. Ep. ad Phil. i.

(35). Ep. ad Polyc. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; Ep. ad Ephes. 1, 3.

(36). There is also the well-known passage in which Irenæus advances the argument which Tertullian also used against the heretics: “If you wish to ascertain the doctrine of the Apostles,

have historical mention by Eusebius of Bishops of this century in Eumenia, Pontus, Comana, and Apamea (37). We have the assertion by Clement, Bishop of Alexandria about the end of the second century, as an unquestioned fact of history, that S. John went about from city to city through Asia Minor, his purpose being in some places to establish Bishops, in others to consolidate whole Churches; in others again to appoint to the clerical office some one of those who had been signified by the Spirit (38). There is a clear distinction here between the office of the bishop and that of the cleric. Tertullian, also, writing about the same date, says of Asia Minor that 'its sequence of bishops, traced back to its origin, will be found to rest on the authority of John' (39).

Now, of course you are remembering that I am not quoting any of these writers as if they were infallible. I am giving these records only as so many historical evidences, which I should be quite prepared to surrender, if any of greater authority and greater weight could be advanced upon the other side. Nor am I resting the historical argument for Episcopacy upon these statements only. I am merely using them to bridge over the gulf which lies between the Scripture history and the middle of the second century. If this has been accomplished there is no need of further evidence, for the learned of all parties admit that the

apply to the Church of the Apostles. In the succession of Bishops tracing their descent from the primitive age and appointed by the Apostles themselves, you have a guarantee for the transmission of the true faith, which no isolated, upstart, self-constituted teacher can furnish. There is the Church of Rome, for instance, whose episcopal pedigree is perfect in all its links, and whose earliest Bishops, Linus and Clement, associated with the Apostles themselves. There is the Church of Smyrna, again, whose Bishop, Polycarp, the disciple of S. John, died only the other day."—Irenæus iii. 2, 3, 4, &c.

(37). Euseb. v. 16, 23, 24.

(38). Quis dives salvetur, p. 959.

(39). Tertullian adv. Marcion. iv. 5.

history of later years is on our side. And I think I may now say that the connecting link has been shewn. Yet remember it was not necessary to have shewn it. The facts which precede, and those which follow this dark period are themselves sufficient to prove that Episcopacy has come down to us from the Apostles' days and with the sanction of their authority.

And once more, we are not dependent upon any amount of Church history for our assertions as to the value of Episcopacy. We have four distinct lines of argument beside the historical; and the chain of evidence which I like best is the Scriptural evidence which I find in the New Testament, and on which alone I should be quite content to take my stand.

But I have no right to stand entirely upon that. The other four chains—(1) from our own experience; (2) from immense antiquity; (3) from the Old Testament analogies; and (4) from plain historical statements—all are added to this fifth chain, not to lengthen but to strengthen it. And though it is possible that some one of these may be weakened, or perhaps overpowered, by ingenious argument, it is not possible that all five of them can be annihilated. Yet this is the task which lies before those who disparage our ecclesiastical orders. They must defeat each one of our five lines of argument separately and thoroughly. For if only four of them be destroyed, the fifth is yet vigorous and unscathed. Or suppose that they are able to reduce the five into mere weak probabilities; still even then they must explain the unpleasantly significant fact, that those five different modes of investigation all agree in suggesting the same conclusion and pointing in the same direction. This five-fold coincidence is simple and natural, if the conclusion be a sound one; it is incredible and monstrous, if the conclusion be false."



CHAPTER XL

THE EXAMINATION OF OBJECTIONS.

“**A**LL this sounds strong and clear as you put it,” said Andrews, “But I cannot forget that it is only one side of the case, and before I give judgment upon it I should like to hear the other side; I should like to know what Presbyterians and Congregationalists would say to it?”

“Well, you must ask them that. In all that I have been saying, I have never forgotten the answers by which they try to meet these arguments. I have tried to consider these answers, and I have not given one argument that I think they are able to upset. I have tried also to state my case in such a way that, if ever you hear their answers, you may see how to silence them; but it would be unfair of me to pretend to give those answers. I am quite convinced that they cannot overthrow even one of our lines of defence, and much less all five of them combined. With this conviction I could not state their arguments at all as strongly as those who believe in them, and I should be dishonest if I pretended to do so. To see full justice done to their side, you must go to one of themselves, and hear him add to it all the force which comes from conviction. No judge and no jury would ever trust the plaintiff’s version of the defendant’s case, or the defendant’s idea of the plaintiff’s ground of action.”

“But you can tell us,” he answered, “the general line which is usually taken by your opponents, that we

may see the direction in which we are to look for their attacks and for your weak points."

"That of course I can do ; but I shall do it very shortly, to guard you against supposing that I am doing full justice to their cause.

Our first line of argument, you remember, was from the fitness of our system in itself. And you can easily imagine how they argue against its costliness, and the tyranny and arrogance which it is calculated to create in priests and prelates. What they ought to do however is : either to shew that every other army, or society, finds a graduated system of unequal ranks among its officers pernicious and costly ; or else, to shew why a system which is found useful in all other associations, must necessarily become mischievous in the Lord's Society ; and in either case, why they themselves adopt such evident imitations of it as we find in their Moderators and Presidents.

Our second line of argument was taken from the immense antiquity of our threefold system and the unnatural strangeness of the revolution that must have invented it almost under the Apostles' eyes, if it was not really instituted by their authority, or at least with their silent approval. They try to meet this by supposing that a position of prominence was first permitted to some remarkable Presbyters, and that the strongly marked distinction, which afterwards was found separating the Bishop from the Presbyters, grew almost imperceptibly from what had originally resembled the status of their Moderator rather than that of our Bishop. If this was however such a natural change as to follow imperceptibly from that permitted priority, it seems that either it is not a very bad or unchristian thing in itself ; or else the system that so soon lapsed into it must have been very inferior to the better system contrived by Knox and Melville ; and our Lord and His Apostles must have been strangely blind to the evils which would naturally arise out of what they permitted in the Church.

But again, if it is such a natural thing for a prominent position in the ministry to grow into a separate order, they ought to explain to us how it happens that the position of Metropolitan, which we find in the very earliest times, has not yet risen into a fourth order, but is still treated only as a position of influence and dignity within the one order of the Episcopate. The stationariness of the Episcopal system is proved by the continued existence of Metropolitans as leaders only among Bishops, and not a separate order.

But indeed the mere rough outline of ecclesiastical history taken by itself, leads to one or other of two conclusions. Either our system of a threefold order in the Christian ministry was an original and therefore Divine institution in the Church; or else it was adopted by the whole Church unanimously, within a hundred years of the Church's birth, and before it had been rent by schisms. It comes therefore either with the sanction of our Lord and His Apostles, or else with the full and undivided authority of that supernatural society which our Lord founded, and to which He gave His Holy Spirit. Either of these two conclusions would be sufficient for us; but the former is immeasurably the more probable.

Our third line of defence was taken from the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures. These prove that a division of the officials of a society into ranks is not in itself displeasing to God, since He Himself established such division, not only in secular but also in sacred offices. This argument they cannot meet by a flat denial. But some of them attempt to despise it, as if it were no precedent for us. They say that we must build nothing upon it, because the Jewish system was very different from the Christian. Yet these same objectors are glad enough to bring forward the circumcision of infants under the Jewish covenant, as a proof that the baptism of infants under the Christian covenant is not in itself displeasing to God, but very agreeable to His own actions in old time.

Others argue more plausibly that, if this proves anything, it proves too much for us; that, if it is to be taken as a precedent at all, it is a precedent for the papacy rather than episcopacy; since the one High Priest is better represented by the one Supreme Pontiff than by a bench or company of Bishops. To this we answer—First, it would be an exact precedent for a supreme Pontiff and *two* inferior orders, if such a system were established anywhere; but the Papal system has three orders under their Pope. Secondly, it is an exact precedent for each ordinary diocese, where the one Bishop presides over Priests and Deacons; and a diocese is not (like a congregation) a mere fragment, but an integral part where the Church appears in miniature, all parts of the Divine machinery being represented there. Thirdly, it is a precedent, though not an exact one, for any sort of division into ranks, and therefore for both the Papal and Episcopal systems. The argument which I rested upon the constitution of the Jewish priesthood, was not that our system is an exact copy or continuation of it, but merely that ours has this one feature in common with it, and therefore that this feature is not in its own nature an evil thing, displeasing to God.

Our fourth argument, which is from the New Testament, they try to meet in two ways.

First, negatively. They attempt to shew that the principle of inequality or prelacy, even if it be not unreasonable in itself, and not absolutely out of harmony with the old covenant, still is opposed to the spirit of the New Testament, and condemned as such by both our Lord and His Apostles. The passages on which they rely for this are mainly two. First, those in which our Lord is represented as saying to His Apostles: 'Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister; and whoso-

ever of you will be chiefest shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many' ⁽¹⁾. 'These words,' they say, 'contain Christ's solemn warning against prelacy. It was spoken to His ministers, and proves that there were to be no ranks or orders among them, none who were to have more authority than others; all were to be of equal rank.'

Now one unfortunate result of that argument is this: It has just as much weight against the system of two orders, Bishops and Deacons ⁽²⁾, which the Apostles confessedly did establish, as it has against our system of three orders. If this warning does not forbid the existence of *two* orders within the ministry, of which one was to have more authority than the other, it is hard to see how it forbids the existence of *three* orders. Another unfortunate result of it is this: That by contrasting His disciples with Gentile kings, our Lord shews that He is speaking of their exercising authority over *their subjects* rather than over each other. This would lead us to apply the argument to prove that the Twelve Apostles themselves had no right to exercise that authority over the Church which they did exercise sometimes with great firmness ⁽³⁾. It would certainly make us very doubtful about our Lord's approval of S. Paul's charge to Titus, 'These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority' ⁽⁴⁾.

But indeed, if we look with any care at it, this passage is rendered quite powerless against our system. Its words were spoken to the Twelve Apostles, not to ministers in general. Any force which it has against divisions can only be against divisions among the

(1). S. Mark x. 42-46. Compare S. Luke xxii. 24-31; S. Matt. xx. 25-29.

(2). Phil. i. 1. Compare the charges to Timothy and Titus as to the qualities to be required in bishops and deacons.

(3). Acts v. 1-14, &c.

(4). 1 Tim. iv. 11, 12; Titus ii. 15.

apostolic Twelve, or within the highest rank of the chief officers. Applied as Presbyterians apply it, it might have some weight against the Roman idea of S. Peter's primacy over his fellow apostles, and so against the Papal supremacy as founded upon that primacy. But it does not in the least conflict with the notorious fact, that the very Apostles to whom these words were spoken did exercise over both Presbyters and Deacons an authority which they knew their Lord had given them.

These answers are quite independent of any particular interpretation which may be given to the passage. But the illustration which our Lord used from His own position in the world, proves that the words were spoken not against the firm use of any authority with which He might entrust His servants, but only against their exercising that authority *in a domineering spirit*. He Himself was made the Head over all things to the Church. Nothing can possibly be more absolute than His authority and lordship over His kingdom. Yet nothing can be further from a domineering spirit than the spirit in which He exercised His authority. He was among the Twelve, 'as one that serveth,'⁽⁵⁾ not to be ministered unto but to minister'⁽⁶⁾. Yet that did not prevent Him from being their 'Lord and Master'⁽⁷⁾.

In the same way 'a kingdom was really appointed' to the Twelve, that they 'should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel'; yet they were to use their authority humbly and lovingly, not *upon their people*, but in their service. If a domineering spirit in the rulers of the Church is all that our opponents argue against, we agree with everything which can be said on that point. But this spirit has been found in Presbyterian Ministers as well as in Bishops, and among laymen as well as clergy. All invested with any office in the Church need this caution from our

(5). Luke xxii. 27.

(6). Matt. xx. 28.

(7). John xiii. 13.

Lord's words, and also S. Peter's warning in his First Epistle, 'Not as lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock' ⁽⁸⁾. But to say that such passages weaken the force of any of the facts which I have produced, or that they destroy all Scripture proof of anything except a ministerial equality, is too absurd to need any further argument.

I am not sure that I am right in classing under this head of negative argument all other attempts to weaken the force of our proof. But I may as well mention these now.

The Congregationalists attempt to shew that there was no actual society formed at all; but that each separate congregation was a separate Church, complete in itself, and independent of any other. And further, that any number of individual Christians have a right to form themselves at any time into a congregation and appoint ministers to themselves. These ministers must thus derive their authority from beneath, not from above; from their congregations, not from those whose authority to ordain has descended to them from Christ's commission to His Apostles. If we would grant them this principle, they would hardly quarrel with our three orders. Every minister they say is a bishop; his congregation is his diocese, and he rules it with the help of his elders, and works it with the aid of his deacons. Against the plain statement that I have given of the formation of the one society presided over by the Apostles ⁽⁹⁾, into which each new member was introduced by baptism, they bring only a few isolated expressions, such as, 'the Church in his house' ⁽¹⁰⁾, and 'the seven Churches which are in Asia' ⁽¹¹⁾.

They forget that the very book which contains the last of these expressions, speaks also of 'the seven

(8). 1 Peter v. 3.

(9). See chap. vii.

(10). Romans xvi. 1, 5, 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15.

(11). Rev. i. 4, 11, 20.

spirits which are before the throne' (12). If they are unable to see that the Church, which is found in various phases and places, in little companies and large congregations, has still an unity and oneness which underlies all variety: it is strange that they can believe there is an eternal unity in the Sevenfold Spirit of God which underlies all His various gifts and manifestations. 'There is one Body and one Spirit' (13), although the Book of the Apocalypse, which has 'almost as many mysteries as it has letters' (14), speaks of 'seven spirits' and 'seven churches' within the short compass of one verse. All attempts at argument that are founded only on such expressions ought to be silenced by one plain statement, that various congregations were subject to the common authority of the Church's rulers. One passage alone ought to be sufficient for them: 'They delivered them the decrees for to keep, which were ordained of the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem.' But you remember that I did not rest my answer upon that one passage (15).

The Presbyterians devote their whole attention to the argument that there are no ranks and no orders, or at least not three orders in the Christian ministry. But the way in which they usually attempt to shew this is very unfortunate for their cause. They prove that there were two orders during Christ's personal ministry, the Twelve and the Seventy, and they ask triumphantly, 'Where was the third order then?' We answer, 'In the person of Christ, who ordained and superintended both these.'

(12.) "John to the *seven churches* which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the *seven spirits* which are before His throne."—Rev. i. 4.

(13). Ephes. iv. 4.

(14). "The more I read this wonderful book, the more I am convinced that the phraseology is little short of mathematical accuracy."—*Bishop Horsley* (Brit. Mag., April, 1834).

(15). See chap. vi.

They shew that there were two distinct orders in the days of the Apostles, as plainly mentioned in the case of the Philippian Church (Bishops and Deacons) ⁽¹⁶⁾. They ask triumphantly, 'Where was the third order then?' We answer again, 'In the persons of the Apostles who ordained and superintended those two.'

They shew that the Epistles to Timothy and Titus speak of two orders only, Bishops (or Elders) and Deacons, whom Timothy and Titus were to select; and they ask once more, 'Where was the third order then?' Of course we answer, 'In the persons of Timothy and Titus, who were to select, ordain, and superintend these.' Of course they retort upon us by saying, 'Ah! those special officers are not to be counted.' And if in every case they do ignore one order, we, of necessity, must be reduced to two, since one from three leaves two, as certainly as one and two make three.

But, even suppose that this fallacy escapes us, we can hardly help seeing that in every one of these stages of Church work there were always at least two ranks under these extraordinary officers. Our system, then, of employing two ranks under the officer that they think so objectionable, is a nearer approach to the primitive practice than theirs, of insisting upon one only rank and absolute equality in the Christian ministry.

If duality, a twofold system, was the Divine and Apostolic system, and if no branch of the Church has succeeded in retaining the duality, except by the help of a third order, then that third, as being essential to the existence of the two, ought in anywise to be retained in the Church of Christ. Their utmost success, therefore, in this argument, would annihilate the Presbyterian position, and invalidate every one of

(16). "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi, *with the Bishops and Deacons.*"—Phil. i 1.

their assertions about the necessity for equality and the viciousness of inequality.

Again, all such arguments are only negative. They may possibly weaken our position, but they in no way strengthen theirs. What they ought to prove is, not merely that our orders are without authority, but also that an absolute equality of ministers all in one grade and of equal rank was the Divine and Apostolic institution.

I know that they rely greatly upon the fact which we all accept, that the second order in the Christian ministry was in the first century called indifferently by either or both of those two titles, Bishop and Presbyter. But we are contending for things and offices, not names. And the use or disuse of names, which could not have at once become technical, makes no difference as to the facts. And, even granting all they desire on this question, there is no possible way of evading the fact that, both in Scripture and the earliest Church writings, there are clear proofs that there were always in the Church two distinct orders in the ministry. There is no shadow of evidence to shew that there ever was the complete and absolute equality which they fancy is the characteristic of a 'Gospel Church.'

And now when we come to their positive arguments, which (supposing we were out of court) they must advance in order to prove the Presbyterian system, these arguments are weak indeed. They bring forward the two supposed Presbyterian ordinations on which I have already commented; first, that of Barnabas and Saul; and, secondly, that of Timothy⁽¹⁷⁾. Then they quote a verse from the Acts of the Apostles, which says that the Apostles Paul and Barnabas 'ordained elders in every Church'⁽¹⁸⁾; and lastly, they appeal to a verse in the First Epistle to Timothy, where S. Paul says, 'Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, specially them that labour in the word and doctrine'⁽¹⁹⁾."

(17). Chap. ix. (18). Acts xiv. 23. (19). 1 Tim. v. 17.

"I remember," said Andrews, "that you have already spoken of the two cases of ordination. You shewed that the laying on of hands upon Barnabas and Saul was no precedent for ordinary Presbyterian ordination; since the office conveyed by it was either more, or else less than that of an ordinary minister, and the ordainers either more or else less than ordinary Presbyters. I remember, also, that you shewed that the Apostle S. Paul took such an important part in Timothy's ordination that he was able to speak of the grace as being conferred by the laying on of his hands. So you may pass by these two passages. But I do not see how they found an argument upon the verse in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts—'ordaining elders in every Church.'"

"They say that the words prove that there must have been a plurality of elders in every congregation, and therefore their system of both ruling and preaching elders."

"But surely," said Andrews, "that is an unreasonable pressing of the words. If Paul and Barnabas went through the district ordaining one elder where one was needed, and two where two were needed, but at least one everywhere, it would quite satisfy the historian's statement. If I were to say of a lady that she went through the village leaving half-crowns in every house, I might mean that there was no house which did not receive at least two; but I might mean less than that. It would be absurd to bring a charge against me of inaccuracy or exaggeration, if it was proved that there were several houses in which she left only one. In fact the expression would be justified by her distribution of half-crowns among the houses, one to each."

"Quite so. But even if the word Church is to be confined to a single congregation, which is not necessary, and, even if we grant their interpretation of the phrase, still it would not prove their system. It is quite possible that Paul and Barnabas acted upon the

principle that it is not good for a man to be alone, and sent the labourers 'two and two,' as our Lord had sent the seventy, and as Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, and Barnabas and Mark had sought companionship in work. Even if this were granted to them, I cannot see how they can build positive arguments upon it, since the expression would be satisfied by the appointment of a rector and curate, as well as of one preaching and a few ruling elders."

"Come then," he said, "to their next verse: 'Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, specially them that labour in the word and doctrine.'"

"Yes; there again they assume that the Apostle's words prove the existence of two distinct orders of elders: one order ruling but not preaching, and the other preaching, but not ruling."

"But that is impossible," answered Andrews, "for those who labour in the word and doctrine are expressly included within the class of those who rule well, and therefore must be both ruling and preaching elders."

"Yes; but their point is, that the ruling elders are not to be as highly honoured as the preaching elders. Now they think that we think that the ruling elder corresponds to our bishop, and the elder who labours in the word and doctrine to our presbyter (or priest); and then they triumphantly proclaim that S. Paul ranks the working clergy above the ruling bishop. Unfortunately, however, we do not think what they think we think. We believe that both of those two classes may belong to the same order. It seems to us plain people that the most natural explanation of the verse is this: 'Let the clergy who rule their congregations wisely be honoured above those who are unwise, and of these, those especially who, beside being judicious in their pastoral management, are also laborious teachers of Christian doctrine.' It seems to us that all these words might be applied either to bishops, in our

own sense of the word, or else to parish priests, and that either order might contain individuals of both characters. We have known bishops who were poor preachers, and without much weight as theologians, yet highly honoured for the judgment and care with which they ruled their diocese. And we have known others who were not only good administrators, but also diligent and eloquent in teaching. We might have said of them—'Let the bishops that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, specially them that labour in the word and doctrine.' But we never supposed that these differences between the characters of individuals was destructive of episcopacy.

Thus these two passages, which, as far as I can see, seem to be fair specimens of the texts on which Presbyterians rely, are utterly and entirely without weight against us. But remember, I am not a fair advocate for their side. You must go to them for a full statement of their own case.

Well, now we come to our last line of argument—namely, the statements of ancient history. And here, again, I shall divide their attack into two distinct branches.

Their negative argument is that which relies upon the silence of certain writings which might have been expected to speak strongly on our side; and also upon the doubtfulness of other writings which do distinctly assert the Apostolic origin of these orders.

Of all this I have already spoken, and need only remind you how exceedingly improbable it is that all writings of the time would have been silent if the Divinely-established constitution of the Church was really being revolutionised; and also that the writings of the second century are not as silent as they think: that even those on which they most rely—the Epistles of Clement and Polycarp—contain features which can hardly be explained, except upon the supposition of the existence of an office of superintendent distinct from the two lower orders in the Christian ministry.

It is true that almost any of the separate writings which we quote may be explained away, some by interpreting them otherwise, some by suggesting a mistake on the part of the writer, and the rest by a bold charge of deliberate fraud and forgery. Still, it is impossible to destroy the fact that all these expressions are apparently pointing towards the same conclusion, and this a conclusion which every other line of argument combines to assure us is a true conclusion—namely, that the Church of Christ started with a three-fold order in her ministry.

But when any of our opponents attempt a counter statement, and a positive argument in defence of their own system, then the weakness of their case becomes most evident.

Some of them, indeed, are bold enough to imagine out of their own brain what the case ought to have been, then to state confidently that it was so, and finally to challenge us to produce out of the writings of the second century a clear denial of this nineteenth century myth. Here and there among the writings which have come down to us from ancient times, they find isolated expressions, which more or less harmonise with their assertions, and then their readers fancy that their case is proved.

A little care, however, in examining the works from which they quote, and a few pertinent questions will shew that every historical statement of theirs is built up upon many a 'perhaps,' and 'probably' and 'of course,' and 'no doubt'; but with no one positive statement in its support from any writer of the first or second centuries. Good illustrations of this will be found in the writings of Dr. Killen, which are highly valued by the Presbyterians in the North of Ireland. Here is one at which I have just opened: 'The elders who were at first set over the Christian societies, were all ordained in each Church on the same occasion⁽²⁰⁾, and were *perhaps* of

(20). The only foundation for this quiet assumption is the text so often quoted—Acts xiv. 23.

nearly the same age, so that neither their date of appointment, nor their years could well determine the precedence⁽²¹⁾; and it is *probable* that in general no single individual continued permanently to occupy the office of Moderator. . . . In Rome and elsewhere, the primitive elders at first, *perhaps*, filled the chair alternately⁽²²⁾."

A little thought will shew you how delightfully one could compose a history in this fashion, as the German in the story who, when he was asked to describe a camel, retired into his study, and after a fortnight's thought produced the idea of the camel evolved out of his own consciousness. No wonder if a history so composed becomes a thoroughly Presbyterian history of the Church.

The case, however, has just three historical difficulties, by which many have been confused. The first is this: Writers of the third and fourth centuries, who attached precise technical meanings to the words 'bishop' and 'presbyter,' are often puzzled by the loose way in which those names were used in the beginning. They give conflicting explanations of several verses of Holy Scripture in which the names occur. And some apply S. Paul's statements to the highest and some to the second order of the Christian ministry. Yet their very perplexity proves the fact of the distinction between these orders at the time they wrote, and also for the whole period during which their own memories enabled them to act as witnesses. If the distinction between bishop and presbyter had been a recent invention, they might have tried to conceal that from us, but they could not have been puzzled by it.

(21). The object of this assumption is to get rid of such proofs of the election of the bishop who presided over the presbyters, as have come down to us in the case of Simeon (p. 141).

(22). These assumptions are intended to impress the reader with a conviction that there are primitive precedents for the annual election of moderators for the year.

The second difficulty is this. It was an open question in the Church whether the bishop held a distinct office from that of the presbyter, or only a different degree within the same office. This, however, is a mere question of names and titles, and in no way affects the principle. Defenders of Episcopacy, from the fourth century to the present day, from Jerome down to Bishop Burnet, have taken the second of these positions as freely as others have the first. Both bishops and presbyters hold equally the full office of the Christian ministry. The one, however, has it only to exercise. The other is so completely invested with it that he can not only exercise it, but also impart it to others (*i.e.*, ordain). And this right of ordaining has been always an essential and the most visible mark of distinction between the bishop and the presbyter, whether that distinction be called one of office or only of degree.

A third difficulty is this, that it is still a matter of discussion whether *in certain exceptional cases*, certain men who were yet not, in the full sense of the word, bishops, were authorised to ordain if they had the consent of the absent bishop. The true solution of this question depends upon the discovery what exact position that was which was held by these men (the chorepiscopi); and it seems to me to be clear and strong against the Presbyterian theory. Yet I need not trouble you with the argument, because, in the first place, theirs was confessedly an exceptional position, differing in some way from that of the ordinary presbyters, and their privileges form no precedent, except for those similarly circumstanced. Again, whatever their exceptional position was, it had been specially committed to them by the bishops, and was exercised under the superintendence of the bishops. It can form no precedent at all for the unauthorised claim of mere presbyters to have the right to exercise the same power at all times and under all circumstances, and against the will of all bishops.

These explanations being remembered, it will be found strictly accurate to assert that all the statements on the subject of the ministry, which have come down to us from Church writers in the first four centuries, either assert that the distinction between bishop and presbyter was of apostolic origin, or may be easily reconciled with a firm belief in this origin of it.

There are, of course, certain expressions to be found here and there in the volumes of some of the fathers of the Church, which, taken alone, would give the impression that the writers thought otherwise.

But, in the first place, even these are only expressions of opinion by fallible men, not statements of facts which came within their observation as witnesses. And in the second place, when those passages are plainly examined, and compared with other statements by the same writers, they only confirm our position."





CHAPTER XII.

THE OPINIONS OF JEROME AND OTHERS.

“**Q**U F course I cannot expect anyone to accept these assertions of mine about the words of ancient writers, without some shew of evidence. Yet, equally of course, no one can expect me to repeat all that has been said by every ancient writer.

I think my best plan will be to select one writer, and submit his opinions to a full examination, and then content myself with single quotations from the works of others. I think, also, that the keenest critic will admit that my selection is not unfair, when I say that I select Jerome as the one whose opinions I shall quote at length. I select him simply for this one reason, that it is on extracts from Jerome's writings that Presbyterians mainly rely for evidence in their favour. Blondel, indeed, calls his work in defence of Presbyterianism, 'An apology for the opinions of Jerome concerning Bishops and Presbyters' ⁽¹⁾. Yet even Blondel puts in his claim only for the *opinion* of Jerome. He never dreams of asserting that Jerome witnessed the destruction of a primitive ministerial equality, or the invention of Episcopacy. For, as I have shewn already ⁽²⁾, Blondel expressly refers the origin of Episcopacy to the early part of the second century, two hundred years at least before Jerome was born.

(1). Blondel's *Apologia pro Sententia Hieronymi*. Amsterdam, 1646.

(2). Chap. iv. p. 45.

Jerome, as I presume you know, was born A.D. 331, at Stridon, in Dalmatia, and was given by his father the best educational advantages of the time. Of these he made good use, and became the best informed in sacred literature of all the Latin fathers. He was ordained a Presbyter at Antioch A.D. 378 or 379; travelled much, and died A.D. 420. His writings are in those four large volumes which contain nine tomes of genuine and spurious works (3).

In considering the value of the personal opinions of such a writer, we must remember that criticism of historical statements had not in his day reached anything like the perfection to which it has been brought in this nineteenth century. And in estimating the weight of Jerome's statements, we must remember that, though probably the most learned man of his day, he was vehement in his passions, inaccurate in many of his statements, and most unmeasured in his language. Donaldson, who is certainly not prejudiced in favour of Episcopacy, says of him: 'We have convincing proof that he could be deluded by the most absurd stories, and that in fact he had no idea of examining critically circumstances which took place in his own time and even in his own neighbourhood. . . . We know that, if his anger were roused, truth and decency were cast to the winds. We have also to take into account the rapidity of his productions. He wrote at an inordinate rate, not having time to consider his thoughts or statements, and not caring to marshal his authorities. To such inconvenience did his rashness sometimes put him, that he had to retract statements which he made in regard to incidents in his own life (4).'

It is clear that Jerome's opinion must not be drawn from one or two isolated passages, but gathered cautiously from a general view of all his writings, and

(3). The ninth tome contains the works falsely attributed to Jerome.

(4). *The Apostolical Fathers*, by Robert Donaldson, p. 19.

from a comparison of his statements in differing and opposing humours. And even then his personal opinion in favour of a theory in which he was strongly interested is by no means infallible.

Now it is well known that Jerome, himself only a Presbyter, wrote with extreme bitterness against the Bishops of his own time. Whether this bitterness was justified or not, it undoubtedly lends great weight to anything which he at any time says or admits in favour of their office. And thus the following fact becomes extremely significant. Though he quotes largely from the works of Eusebius, and was intimately acquainted with his Church history and its strong assertions about the apostolic origin of Episcopacy, still he never once contradicts those statements, never seems to suspect that there is any inconsistency between them and anything that he himself had ever written.

That the Bishop's ministerial office is essentially the same kind of office as that which is held by the Priest; that the Bishop is essentially a Priest (or Presbyter) with the peculiarity of being authorised to ordain Priests, and to hand down this power of ordaining, Jerome strongly asserts; but that this peculiar distinction does exist between them, he nowhere denies. Indeed, his own personal history is itself a proof of the existence of such a distinction in the fourth century. Though he was ordained Presbyter in the year A.D. 378, he complained afterwards that he had never been consecrated Bishop. Yet he says that 'in the opinion of almost everyone he was counted worthy of the High Priesthood' (5). In his writings he mentions the existence of the three orders easily and naturally, and is evidently quite unconscious that there was any doubt or question about them; as, for example, in his letter to Eustochium, where, after his description of Paula's death-bed, he says, 'There were present Bishops of Jerusalem and other cities, and an innu-

(5). "Omnium pene judicio dignus Summo Sacerdotis decernebar."—*Ep.* 43, *ad Asellam*, tom. i. p. 196.

merable multitude of Priests of the lower order, and of Levites' (6). Again, in his letter to Heliodorus, after commenting on S. Paul's list of qualifications for a Bishop (7), he passes on to consider the next verses, upon which he says: 'And the other points having been worked out, he shewed no less diligence in the case of the *third* grade, saying, 'The Deacons also must be grave' (8).' In his work against Lucifer, who considered the Episcopal office to be of such immense importance that he denounced the reception of heretical Bishops without re-consecration, Jerome makes the orthodox say in the dialogue, 'I do not deny that this is the custom of the Churches that, to those who have been baptised by Presbyters and Deacons at a distance from the more important towns, the Bishop goes forth to lay his hand upon them for the purpose of invoking the Holy Ghost' (9). In his treatise against Jovinian, he says: 'Bishop, Priest, and Deacon are titles, not of personal merit, but of offices' (10); and, like other ancient writers, he here (as elsewhere) compares these with the offices of High Priest, Priest, and Levite in the older dispensation. He says: 'In the Old Testament and in the New, the

(6). "Aderant Hierosolymorum [Joannes (?)] et aliarum urbium Episcopi, et Sacerdotum inferioris gradus et Levitarum innumerabilis multitudo." (*Ep.* 108, *ad Eustochium*, tom. i. p. 722). These two quotations shew how universally in the fourth century the analogy between the Jewish and Christian ministers was accepted.

(7). 1 Tim. iii. 1-8.

(8). "Non minorem in tertio gradu adhibuit diligentiam, dicens Diaconos," &c.—*Ep.* 14 *ad Heliod.* tom. i. p. 35.

(9). "Non quidem abnego hanc esse ecclesiarum consuetudinem ut, ad eos qui longe a majoribus urbibus per Presbyteros et Diaconos baptizati sunt, Episcopus ad invocationem Sancti Spiritus manum impositurus excurrat."—*Dialog. contra Luc.* tom. ii. p. 181.

(10). "Episcopus, Presbyter, Diaconus, non sunt meritum nomina sed officiorum. . . . Si autem non plurimæ mansiones quomodo et in veteri Testamento et in novo, alium ordinem Pontifex tenet, alium Sacerdotes, alium Levitæ, alium Janitores, alium Aeditui."—*Adv. Jovin.* liber ii. p. 369.

High Priest holds one rank, the Priests another, and the Levites another.' 'In the Old Testament and in the New.' What stronger language could he have used to shew that he believed the different orders in the ministry were inherent in the new covenant given us by our Lord?

It is quite true that Jerome feels so strongly the overwhelming dignity which is attached to the consecration of the elements in the Holy Supper, that he asserts that the Priests who have the power of thus creating the Body of Christ, are in no way inferior to any. It is true that he uses this strong personal opinion and the known fact of the early interchange of the titles Bishop and Presbyter, to prove that the two first orders in the ministry are of the same rank. But he never once denies that there has always been a distinction between them in this respect, that the Bishop alone has the authority to ordain.

Some of his expressions might, therefore, have been quoted in favour of the irregularities in the ancient Church of Ireland, where a Bishop was kept in each monastery as a kind of ordaining machine, but under the control of his chief, who might be Presbyter, Deacon, or Layman. But none of his words have anything to favour the theory for which Presbyterians are now trying to use them; that there was no difference or distinction at all at the time of the Apostles' decease, between ministers of the first and ministers of the second order.

Again, it is also true that Jerome was so carried away by the vehemence with which he defended a particular view, that he laid himself open to many charges of inconsistency, and that isolated passages from different works of his may be quoted in apparent contradiction to each other.

But a fair examination of all his writings gives an irresistible conviction that Jerome felt (as we do) the inherent and original distinction between the two offices of Bishop and Presbyter, although he thought

the distinction slight in comparison with the far greater disparity between the offices of Presbyter and Deacon.

When, for example, he was dealing with what he considered the heresy of Vigilantius, he expressed himself in this language: 'I wonder that the holy Bishop, in whose diocese he is said to be a Presbyter, submits to his frenzy, and does not crush the worthless vessel with his *Apostolic rod*, and rod of iron, and deliver him to the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved' ⁽¹¹⁾. When he was enforcing the practical importance of the Bishop's office, as in the treatise against Lucifer already quoted, he said, 'The safety of the Church depends upon the dignity of the High Priest, to whom if an exceeding and eminent power be not given by all, there will be created in the Churches as many schisms as there are Priests' ⁽¹²⁾. Yet he seems at another time not to have regarded this dignity and judicial power as inherent in the Bishop's office, but only conferred upon it by the unanimous voice of the Church, because of the schisms at Corinth, of which S. Paul speaks in his first epistle to the Corinthians ⁽¹³⁾. But even that opinion dates its origin back to the days of the Apostles; and asserts only that, in the arranging for

(11). "Miror sanctum Episcopum, in cujus Parochiâ esse Presbyter dicitur, acquiescere furori ejus; et non virga apostolica virgaque ferrea confringere vas inutile, et tradere in interitum carnis ut spiritus salvus fiat."—*Ep.* 109 *ad Riparium*, tom. i. p. 726.

(12). "Ecclesiæ salus in Summo Sacerdotis dignitate pendet, cui si non exors quædam et ab omnibus eminens detur protestas, tot in ecclesia efficiuntur schismata quot sacerdotes."—*Dialog. cont. Luc.*, tom. ii. p. 182.

(13). "Antequam Diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, Ego sum Pauli, Ego, Apollo, Ego autem Cephæ, communi Presbyterorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat" (see 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 16) "suos putabat esse non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de Presbyteris, electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret, et schismatum semina tollerentur."—*Comment. in Titum*.

the future well-being of the Church, the universal Church at that time decreed that supreme power over the common body of Presbyters should be given to an individual superintendent. This opinion of his, for which he had no further evidence than we have, must not be separated from his other opinions elsewhere expressed, that this arrangement was a part of the New Testament or new covenant, and that ordination was the prerogative of the Bishop.

Holding these opinions, you can understand that, when he sets himself to defend his own order against encroachments by either Bishops or Deacons, he brings out the dignity of his own order so vehemently, that some of his expressions taken alone would lead us to think that Jerome knew of no distinction between Bishops and Presbyters.

The most remarkable example of this is in his epistle to Evagrius (or Evangelus), where he denounces the audacity of some 'who would give Deacons the precedence over Presbyters (that is, over Bishops). For when the Apostle plainly teaches that Presbyters are the same as Bishops, what is the server of tables and widows possessed by, that he insolently thrusts himself above those at whose prayers the Body and Blood of Christ are created?' He then quotes passages from Scripture to prove—First, that the title, Bishop, was applied to those who were evidently of the second grade at Philippi, Miletum, Ephesus, and Crete⁽¹⁴⁾; and Secondly, that the title Presbyter was applied to those who were evidently of the highest grade, of which he gives three cases: (1) those who ordained Timothy; (2) the Apostle S. Peter: and (3) S. John the Beloved⁽¹⁵⁾. Then he proceeds:

(14). Phil. i. 1; Acts xv. 18; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2; Tit. i. 5.

(15). 1 Tim. iv. 14; 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 Jno. 1; 3 Jno. 1. The arrangement here of these passages shews that Jerome has all the while distinct positions in his mind. For example, the passage which he quotes from Timothy would have no weight at all, if it was the custom for ordinary Presbyters to ordain. In

‘But that afterwards one was elected who should be preferred to the rest, it was done for a remedy against schism, lest each drawing to himself, the Church of Christ should be rent.’ He quotes as an instance of such an election, the mode in which he says the Bishop of Alexandria was formerly elected by the Presbyters from among their own body, ‘just as an army might elect a general, or Deacons their Arch-deacon.’ This sounds very strong, but (fortunately for his consistency) he winds up the whole passage by saying, ‘For what does the Bishop which the Presbyter may not, *except ordination*’ (16) ?

Naturally, there are passages in this epistle which Presbyterians can quote in their own favour. Yet even his arrangement of his Scripture quotations proves that, while he was most vehement for classing both in the same genus, he was still conscious of a distinction between the species. And the last sentence which I have quoted proves that he had never lost sight of one vital distinction between Bishop and Presbyter, Priest and High Priest.

Still he was not expressing himself there with the judgment and accuracy which he shewed in his letter to Nepotion, where he says : ‘Be thou subject to thy Bishop and receive him as the father of thy soul. This also I say that the Bishops ought to know themselves to be Priests and not Lords, that they honour the clergy as clergy, in order that their clergy may render back honour to them as Bishops. That saying of the orator Domitius is well known : ‘Why,’ he says, ‘am I to treat thee as my Prince, when thou dost not treat me as a Senator ?’ What Aaron and his sons

that case it would only be an instance of calling Presbyters Presbyters. But if it was universally believed that those who ordained were of the first order, then it would be admitted that in this passage the first order were called Presbyters.

(16). “Quid enim facit, excepta ordinatione, Episcopus, quod Presbyter not faciat.”—*Ep. 146 ad Evangelum*, tom. iv. pp. 1081, 1082.

were this we know that the Bishop and his Presbyters are' (17).

No doubt the epistle to Evangelus contains strong statements, yet it would be perfectly absurd to say that all our combined lines of argument are to be set aside, because Presbyterians can quote such passages from the voluminous works of Jerome, in which he seems to express his own individual opinion that the Church was originally governed by a Council of Presbyters, and that the elevation of a Bishop over Presbyters was an afterthought. It is most inconsistent for those who reject the opinion on which he founds that view (namely, the creating the Body and Blood of Christ by the prayer of consecration) (18), to insist on our accepting the view inferred from what they reject.

You see what other opinions Jerome has expressed beside that one as to the origin of the Episcopate, and in such matters of opinion we need not be bound by the one opinion which our opponents approve, when they repudiate almost all his other ideas upon this very matter. If, indeed, they would be content to be bound on all points by what Jerome has written, we might cheerfully acquiesce in his one mistake, for the sake of all his vehement upholding of Episcopacy as Apostolic (19), and a part of the New Testament dispensation (20)."

I was here interrupted by Andrews, who observed : "You said that Jerome, in his epistle to Evangelus, quoted the case of the Alexandrian Church. What was that?"

(17). "Illud etiam dico, quod Episcopi Sacerdotes se esse noverint non Dominos : honorent clericos quasi clericos, ut et ipsis a clericis quasi Episcopis honor deferatur. Scitum illud est oratoris Domitii : cur ego te, inquit, habeam ut Principem, cum tu me non habeas ut Senatorem ? Quod Aaron et filii ejus hoc esse Episcopum et Presbyteros noverimus."—*Ep. 52 ad Nepot.*, tom. i. p. 262.

(18). See above.—*Ep. 146 ad Evangelum*, tom. iv. p. 1081.

(19). *Ep. 109 ad Riparium*. Quoted in note 11, p. 176.

(20). *Adv. Jovin.* Quoted in note 10, p. 174.

"He said that 'at Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist, down to the times of the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius ⁽²¹⁾, the Presbyters always nominated as Bishop one chosen out of their own body and placed in a higher grade; just as if an army were to appoint a general, or Deacons were to choose out of their own body one whom they knew to be industrious and call him Archdeacon. For what can a Bishop do which a Presbyter may not, except ordination?' ⁽²²⁾. For this statement Jerome has given us none of his authorities, and we are completely at his mercy about it, and must remember that the custom of which he speaks is said to have ceased a hundred years before Jerome was born, and that he is not always perfectly accurate. Yet the sentence with which he closes this statement proves, that he did not think this case violated the rule of Episcopal ordination.

The passage, however, has received special attention because of the version which has been given to it by a Bishop of this very Church of Alexandria, who wrote nearly six hundred years after Jerome. This was Eutychius, Bishop of Alexandria in the tenth century, and acknowledged to be a most inaccurate and untrustworthy writer. He missed the force of Jerome's words, who spoke only of nomination, choice and election, and not of ordination by these Presbyters. He thought this custom, which Jerome said had descended from S. Mark's *time*, had been commanded by S. Mark himself, and been the actual consecration of the Patriarch of Alexandria. He then tried to colour up the account and make it more complete by naming the exact number of the Presbyters and describing the ceremony of consecration. Here is his enlarged version of Jerome's statement: 'Mark the Evangelist appointed twelve Presbyters with Anianus, who should continue along with that patriarch; so that as the Patriarchate became vacant, they should elect

(21). *i.e.* A.D. 235-265.

(22). Ep. to Evangelus. Quoted in p. 178, note 16.

one of the twelve Presbyters, on whose head the remaining eleven should lay their hands and bless him and create him patriarch; and then they should elect some distinguished man and constitute him Presbyter along with themselves, in the place of him who was thus made patriarch; so that there should always be twelve. Neither did that institution cease at Alexandria until the time of Alexander the Patriarch of it, who was of that number 318⁽²³⁾. But he prohibited the Presbyters in future from creating the patriarch, and decreed that upon the death of the patriarch Bishops should assemble who should ordain the patriarch⁽²⁴⁾.

That is all an embellished version of Jerome's simpler statement, without a shadow of foundation for its variations from any earlier writings of which we have ever heard.

Yet even suppose that it was correct, it might prove that there actually was one exceptional case, in which certain Presbyters were allowed under certain conditions to ordain the Bishop of one particular see. But it would certainly not prove that all Presbyters were authorised under all circumstances to ordain by the imposition of their hands. And further still, supposing it could be believed, it would prove that S. Mark had both ordained the first Patriarch of Alexandria, and also directed that a distinction between each Patriarch and his Presbyters was to be perpetually marked, by an election and a solemn re-ordination for life of the Presbyter so elected. Whatever theory be supported by this, it is certainly not the Presbyterian theory of the absolute equality of all ecclesiastics.

Unfortunately, however, for his credit, this writer has come into hopeless collision with all reliable authorities, both in his use of the word patriarch, and also in the date that he has given for the cessation of this custom. Alexander was, of all men,

(23). *i.e.* A member of the Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325.

(24). *Eutychii Patr. Alex. Annales* i. p. 331.

the most unfortunate for him to name as having had only Presbyterian ordination⁽²⁵⁾.

His statement is utterly untrustworthy, and must be carefully distinguished from Jerome's account, which narrates a custom not unlike the choice of a Bishop by the Dean and Chapter of a cathedral, and which in no way weakens the force of that impetuous writer's many assertions of the value of the three orders.

I think that the quotations which I have already given ought to convince the most incredulous that Jerome's assertions are at least not destructive of our arguments. I shall add only three others to shew that he has even named certain individual cases of Apostolic succession. In his catalogue of Church writers, occur these passages: (1) 'Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John, and by him ordained Bishop of Smyrna, was chief of all Asia'; (2) 'James, who is called the brother of our Lord, was by the Apostles ordained Bishop of Jerusalem'; (3) 'Clement—of whom Paul writing to the Philippians says, 'With Clement also and other my fellow-labourers whose names are in the Book of Life'—was the fourth Bishop of Rome after Peter⁽²⁶⁾.'

But now, lest any suspicion should rest upon your minds about the mode of ordaining at Alexandria, because of these quotations which I have made from the writings of Jerome and Eutychius, I shall call your attention to undoubted facts about that see, which are worth a whole cartload of opinions.

About the beginning of the fourth century, the affairs of the Church of Alexandria were in considerable confusion, and a Presbyter named Colluthus took advantage of it to ordain Ischyra and others for a district in Egypt. The validity of these pretended

(25). See below p. 183.

(26). Jerome (*Catal. Scrip. Eccl.*, tom. iv. pp. 102, 103.) The list of Bishops of Rome which Jerome accepts is evidently that quoted in chap. x. : (1) Peter and Paul; (2) Linus; (3) Anencletus; (4) Clement.

ordinations was called in question by Athanasius, who sent Macarius, one of the Presbyters of Alexandria, to forbid Ischyras from performing any priestly functions.

Now, if Alexander, the patriarch of Alexandria, had himself been ordained according to S. Mark's precept, by Presbyters only, as Eutychius pretends, here was a splendid opportunity for appealing to that as a precedent. But there was no such appeal. On the contrary, a synodical epistle was written by the Bishops of Egypt, Thebais, Lybia, and Pentapolis, containing this passage: 'The Presbyter, who is falsely asserted to have been present, is that notorious Ischyras, who was not ordained Presbyter by the Church, nor (when Alexander received the Presbyters ordained by Melitius) was he reckoned among their number, nor was he ordained by him. By what means then became Ischyras a Presbyter? or by what power was he ordained? By Colluthus? For this only remains to be affirmed. But it is so notorious that Colluthus died a Presbyter, and that every ordination of his hand was invalid, and all ordained by him in the schism reduced to the rank of the laity, that it is a matter beyond all doubt to every one' (27).

You see there that the one sufficient ground for disputing the validity of Ischyras' orders was not that he had been ordained by a single individual, for those ordained by Melitius were acknowledged. It was the one fact that Colluthus, who pretended to ordain him, was a Presbyter and not a Bishop. This is marked more strikingly by what we know of Melitius. Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, received the Presbyters ordained by Melitius, and the whole Church agreed with him in acknowledging that their ordination was valid. Yet Melitius was a schismatic Bishop, and the ringleader of the very schism in which Colluthus had taken part. Still his ordinations were counted valid, because he was himself a regularly ordained Bishop; while the very same acts performed by

(27). *Athanas. Apol. ii.*, p. 732.

Colluthus were null and void. The principle on which Alexander acted was that expressed by Augustine : 'As Baptism cannot be obliterated by schism, so neither can orders' ⁽²⁸⁾. Episcopal ordination was, therefore, recognised at Alexandria under the most adverse circumstances as valid ; but Presbyterian attempts to ordain were rejected by the whole Church.

For, if that last quotation was not strong enough for you, I give you now the statement of the Presbyters and Deacons of Mareotis, who are not likely to have joined the Bishops in a conspiracy to rob themselves of a privilege which they thought ever had belonged to them. In their letter to the prefect of Egypt, they describe Ischyrras as 'a man who stated himself to be a Presbyter, when he was no Presbyter, being ordained by Colluthus, who was a Bishop in his own imagination, and was afterwards commanded by Hosius and all the Bishops of the general synod to return to the order of Presbyter ; and all who were ordained by Colluthus returned to their proper station, so that Ischyrras appeared a simple layman' ⁽²⁹⁾.

I now conclude the whole matter by two remarks.

In the first place I call your attention to this fact, that no eminent writer in the first four centuries ever contradicted the assertion then frequently made, that there was an Apostolic distinction between Bishops and Presbyters, and that ordination was the special privilege of the Bishop.

(28). August. (*Cont. lit. Petil.*, tom. ix. p. 44). It is not easy to see how the Church of Rome can reconcile her modern practice of denying both our orders and baptism, with the primitive practice and her own theory, which are so clearly on the other side.

(29). Athanas. (*Epis. Cler. Mareot.* p. 784.) There is a strong temptation to multiply quotations here, but I must content myself with a reference to the canons of the Council of Sardica (now Sophia in Bulgaria) held A.D. 347, in which a canon prescribes that there should be no consecration of a Bishop "per saltum," but that each must go regularly through the three orders of Deacon, Presbyter, and then Bishop. (See also *Conc. Carth.* iii., A.D. 256, can. 79 ; *Conc. Laod.*, A.D. 367, can. 57.)

Jerome never contradicted this, as his own question proves: 'What does a Bishop, with the exception of ordination, which a Presbyter may not also?'

Epiphanius never contradicted it, for he ridicules the notion that there is no difference between the two orders, and shews that there is this manifest distinction between them, saying of the Episcopal order: 'This order begets fathers to the Church, but that (of Presbyter) cannot beget fathers, but through the laver of regeneration begets children to the Church, not fathers, nor teachers' (30).

Chrysostom never contradicted it, for, in his commentary on the First Epistle to Timothy, he says: 'With the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.' He says this not of Presbyters but of Bishops, for Presbyters do not lay hands upon the Bishop (31). And again in his notes on the third chapter: 'After he had spoken concerning Bishops, and described their characters and indicated what they should hold, what avoid, *passing over the order of Presbyters*, he goes on to Deacons. Why? Because there is not much between them (Presbyters) and Bishops, for they have also received the right of teaching and a rule in the Church; and what things he says respecting Bishops, these also are applicable to Presbyters, for *in ordination alone* do they excel them, and in this only do they seem to be superior to the Presbyters' (32).

(30). Epiphanius.—*Evang. adv. Hæres*, lxxv. tom. i. p. 908.

(31). Μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου: Οὐ περὶ πρεσβυτέρων φησὶν ἐνταῦθα, ἀλλὰ περὶ ἐπισκόπων. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ πρεσβύτεροι τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἐχειροτόνουν.—Chrys. Comment. on 1 Tim. v. 14.

(32). Διαλεγόμενος περὶ ἐπισκόπων, καὶ χαρακτηρίσας αὐτοῖς καὶ εἰπὼν τίνα μὲν ἔχειν τῶν δὲ ἀπέχεσθαι χρή, καὶ τὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τάγμα ἀφεῖς, εἰς τοὺς διακόνους μετεπήδησε. Τί δήποτε; ὅτι οὐ πολὺ τὸ μέσον αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν ἀναδεγμένοι, καὶ προστασίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας: καὶ ἃ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἶπε, ταῦτα καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ἀρμόττει. Τῇ γὰρ χειροτονίᾳ μόνῃ ὑπερβεβήκασι, καὶ, τουτῷ μόνον δόκουσι πλεονεκτεῖν τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους.—Chrys. in Ep. ad Timoth. c. iii. hom. xi. tom. xi.

Augustine never contradicted it, although words have been falsely attributed to him and to Ambrose, which seem to assert that 'in Egypt Presbyters ordain *if the Bishop is not present*' (33). Yet even in those passages the context, as well as the words actually used (34) shew that what the writers asserted of these Presbyters was only consecrating the chrism at confirmation, or the elements at Holy Communion, and therefore confirming and celebrating the Holy Eucharist in the absence of the Bishop, but not the right of ordaining Bishops, Presbyters, or Deacons.

And the following quotation will be enough to shew on which side in the controversy Augustine stands: 'You see many cut off from the root of the Christian Society (which by sure propagation is spread throughout all the world by means of the Apostolic sees and the succession of Bishops), boasting under the Christian name of a figure only of the original, &c.' (35)

Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea, in the third century, never contradicted the statements of Hegesippus, Irenæus, and Clement, and Tertullian on this matter, although some have ventured to quote the following as his: 'All power and grace are established in the Church, where seniors preside who possess the power both of baptising, and confirming, and ordaining.' If we translate the expression 'seniors' by the technical term 'Presbyters,' then our opponents seem to have a statement in their favour. But Firmilian himself explains his own meaning in a sentence a little lower down, where he says: 'Unless Paul was inferior to

(33). August. (*Quæst. Vet. in Nov. Test.*) and Ambros. (*Opp.*, tom. vii. p. 283.)

(34). "Consecret" in the one case and "consignent" in the other.

(35). "Vidētis certe multos præcisos a radice Christianæ Societatis quæ per sedes Apostolicas et successiones Episcoporum certa per orbem propagatione diffunditur, de solâ originis figurâ, sub Christiano nomine," &c.—August. *Epist. ad. Madaur*, tom. ii. p. 843.

these Bishops of whom we are now speaking' (36). Clearly his assertion amounts only to this, that the fulness of power and grace in the Church is only to be found where there are ordaining clergy—that is, where there are Bishops. That is in other words, Fermilian asserts that full Church blessings are only to be found in communion with Bishops (37).

This is the first of my two last remarks. The second, which is to be my very last, is a quotation from the learned Bingham :

'Now that there was such a distinction [between the three offices of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon] always observed in the Church is evident : First, from the testimony of most ancient writers, who speak of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons as distinct degrees in the Church, and the two latter as subordinate to the first. The testimonies of Ignatius to this purpose ³⁸ are so full and evident that nothing was ever pretended against them, save only that they are not the genuine remains of that ancient author, which has been so often considered and replied to by learned men ³⁹, that there is no pretence left to favour such an imagination.

The citations are too numerous to be here inserted

(36). "Omnis potestas et gratia in Ecclesia constituta est, ubi president *maiores natu* qui et baptizandi et manum imponendi, et ordinandi possident potestatem. . . . Nisi si his Episcopis de quibus nunc minor fuit Paulus." (*Cyprian. Ep. lxxv. p. 221.*)

(37). Other quotations might have been made, but these were selected as likely to carry special weight, because the defenders of Presbyterians have ventured to name these as supporters of their view. Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian have been already cited, and I suppose Cyprian himself is beyond question. (See *Cypr. ad Flor. Ep. lxxviii., &c.*)

(38). Ignat. Ep. ad Ephes. n. 2, 3, 4 ; Ep. ad Phil. n. 4, 7, 10 ; Ep. ad Smyrn. n. 8 and 12 ; Ep. ad Trall. n. 2, 7, 12, 13 ; Ep. ad Polyc. n. 6.

(39). Pearson. Vind. Ignat. ; Usser de Epis. Ig. ; Voss. Epis. ad Rivel. ; Coteler. Præf. et Not. in Ignat. ; Ball. Def. Fid. Nic, Sec. 3, n. 5, p. 290, &c.

at large, and therefore I shall only give the reader a specimen in one single testimony, by which he may judge of all the rest. In his epistle to the Magnesians, he exhorts them ⁴⁰ to 'do all things in unity, under the Bishop presiding in the place of God, and the Presbyters in the place of the Apostolical Senate, and Deacons to whom is committed the ministry and service of Jesus Christ.' The author ⁴¹ of the Acts of the Martyrdom of Ignatius, lately published from an ancient Greek copy, speaks exactly in the same manner of these three orders, when he says that 'as Ignatius was on his journey to Rome, all the cities and Churches of Asia sent to salute him by their Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.' Not long after these authors lived Pius, Bishop of Rome, whose authority I cite because Blondel ⁴² allows it to be genuine. This author, in his epistle to Justus, of Vienna, gives him the title of Bishop ⁴³, and speaks of Presbyters and Deacons under him. In the beginning of the next age (the third century), we have the testimonies of Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen and Tertullian, all agreeing in the same thing, that there were then in their own times the different orders of Bishops and Presbyters in the Church. 'There are, here in the Church,' says Clement ⁴⁴, 'the different degrees or progressions of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, in imitation of the angelical glory.' Origen takes notice of this distinction above ten times in his works ⁴⁵, which those that please may read at large in

(40). Ignat. Ep. ad Mag. n. 6.

(41). Martyr. Ign. ap Grabe Spicil. Sæcul. 2, t. i., p. 11.

(42). Blondel. Apol. p. 18.

(43). Pius. Ep. ad Just. Vien. "Tu vero apud Senatoriam Viennam. Colobio Episcoporum vestitus, ac Presbuteri et Diaconi te observent,"

(44). Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vi. p. 667. Ἐνταῦθα κ.τ.λ. τὴν ἐκκλησίαν προκοπᾷ ἐπισκόπων, πρεσβυτέρων, διακόνων κ.τ.λ.—Id. Pædag. lib. iii. c. xii. p. 264

(45). Origen. Hom. 2 in Num. ; Hom. 2 in Cantic ; Hom. 6 in Esai ; Hom. 5 and 16 in Ezek. ; Con. in Mat. 19 and 21 ; De orat. ap. Pearson Vindic. Ignat. part i. c. 11, p. 320.

Bishop Pearson. I shall only recite two passages, one out of his homilies upon S. Luke, written while he was a layman, where he says that ⁴⁶ 'Bigamy excludes men from all ecclesiastical dignities; for one that is twice married can neither be made Bishop, Presbyter, nor Deacon.' Here he calls them different 'dignities'; in the other place ⁴⁷ he calls them different 'degrees,' saying, 'Everyone shall be punished according to his degree. If the supreme governor of the Church offends, he shall have the greater punishment. A layman will deserve mercy in comparison of a Deacon, and a Deacon in comparison of a Presbyter.' Bishops, in his opinion, were thus a degree above Presbyters and Deacons. Tertullian frequently ⁴⁸ mentions the same distinction, but more especially in his book 'De Baptismo,' where he says ⁴⁹: 'The right of baptising belongs to the Chief Priest, who is the Bishop; and after him to Presbyters and Deacons, yet not without the authority of the Bishop, for the honour of the Church, in the preservation of which consists the Church's peace. These allegations are sufficient evidences as to matter of fact, and the practice of the Church in the first three ages, that there was then an order of Chief Priests, or Bishops, superior to Presbyters, settled and allowed in the Christian Church' ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

With these specimens of the opinions of ancient writers (commencing with the words of Ignatius, who

(46). Orig. Hom. 17 in Luc. "Ab Ecclesiasticis Dignitatibus non solum fornicatio sed et nuptiæ repellunt. Neque enim Episcopus, nec Presbyter, nec Diaconus, nec Vidua, possunt esse Digami."

(47). Orig. Hom. 5 in Ezek. "Pro modo graduum unusquisque torquebitur," &c.

(48). Tertull. de Monogam. c. 11; De Fuga. c. 11; De Præscript. c. 41.

(49). Tertull. de Bapt. c. 17. Dandi quidem jus habet summus Sacerdos qui est Episcopus; Dehinc Presbyteri et Diaconi, non tamen sine Episcopi auctoritate propter Ecclesiæ honorem, quo salvo salva pax est."

(50). Bingham's Works, vol. 1, bk. ii., chap. i. sec. 2.

was martyred A.D. 116, and ending with the words of Tertullian, who was born A.D. 160, and died about A.D. 220), selected by so learned an author as Bingham, I think I may now leave the cause, which I have examined by the light of reason, Scripture, and history.

And whatever you may think of the strength or weakness of our case, I have good reason to think highly of your temper and patience, which have endured so tedious a discussion."





CHAPTER XIII.

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED.

IFANCY that Andrews and Hazlewood must have talked about these discussions; or how else could the report have spread among my parishioners, that I was decidedly in favour of Episcopacy? That the report did spread is plain.

A few weeks afterwards I was visiting in the outskirts of the parish, and found Mrs. Harvey, who lived in a suburb of the neighbouring town, considerably perplexed. After certain vague answers and sundry silences, she at last broke out with,

"I hear, Sir, you think that nobody except a Bishop can make a man a Minister."

I was a little taken aback by the suddenness of this accusation, but recovering as well as I could, I answered,

"I hear, Ma'am, that you think no woman can give a man a sixpence, unless she happens to have a sixpence to give him."

"Of course I do," she said, laughing, "but I do not see what this has to do with what I said."

"I mean," I answered, "that all that I have said about the Christian Ministry comes to very little more than this. I think that no man can give away the office of a Minister unless he happens to have that office himself, and also the power of giving it away to another. I think you will understand my meaning best in this way. Your husband and his brother

Thomas, and their partner, William Coyle, form the entire firm of their very flourishing business, and have all their affairs in their own hands. If they all three agreed to do it, they could give a partnership to me or to any one else. They could make any one they pleased their agent, or foreman, or porter, or what they chose. But though they could give away their own money, or any post in their own establishment, they could not give away anything in any one else's establishment; could they? Could they appoint me to be foreman in their friend Brown's hardware shop? Could they give me a place or office in the Christian Church? Could they make a man a minister? No, you say? And why not? If they thought it right to try, I am sure they would try very seriously and prayerfully. Well, if in this reverent spirit they laid their hands upon a young man's head, and told him he was now a Christian minister, and chaplain to their firm, would that laying on of hands make him really a clergyman and minister?"

"No, of course not," she said, "because they are not ministers themselves. They cannot give away what they have not got. It is only ministers who can make a man a minister. And I suppose this is what you meant by what you said about the sixpence. But this is not what I began about. I want to know why you think even ministers cannot make a man a minister, unless one of them happens to be a Bishop."

"Ah, we are on our way to that; and you have come one long step with me. You allow that a minister's office is not a thing which every one has; that it does not come of itself to any one, nor yet from the people who are to be under the new minister; but that it must be given to any friend of yours by some one who first has it himself, and then hands it on to your friend."

"I am not quite sure," she said, "that this is not too much to allow you. Could not a congregation make a man their minister?"

" *Their* minister they could, but not *God's* minister. Your husband's workmen could make any man their delegate, and authorise him to represent them and speak for them in anything they had to say to their employers, or to any one else; but they could not give him authority to represent their employers. That authority he must receive from the employers. Think how absurd it would be if the Russians were to take one of their own friends and give him authority to act for the Queen of England in an European conference. That would not make him *our* ambassador. In the same way it would be perfectly absurd to suppose that authority to act as ambassador for God, can come from any one except from God. It must come from above and not from below. Only those who have been commissioned by those who have received authority from Christ, can say, 'Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; We pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled unto God.'⁽¹⁾

But now that you have taken my first step, that no one who is not himself a minister can make anyone else a minister, you must let me help you to take a second step. You know the Rev. Charles King and the Rev. James Smith, the two curates of Kilderry. They are both of them Church clergymen, or ministers as you would say. And I am a Church clergyman also. Suppose we three clergymen agreed to lay our hands upon your husband, and did so solemnly and prayerfully, and then told him he was now a Church clergyman, would that make him a Church clergyman?"

This was rather a harder question than the last, and she took a little time to consider it, but at last she answered,

"No, I suppose not."

"And why not?" I returned. "We three are at least as lawfully ordained ministers as the Presby-

(1). 2 Cor. v. 20.

terians and Methodists are. Even the Westminster Confession allows us that⁽²⁾. Yet, if the three of them who were in charge of a particular district, were to lay hands upon a man, in order to ordain him, I suppose they would tell him that he was now an ordained minister. Why cannot our clergymen do it as well as they? If we are as truly ministers as they are, we ought to be able to do any part of the truly ministerial office as well as they. If any minister has the power of ordaining, why cannot I ordain? If any three ministers can ordain, why cannot we three?"

"I suppose," she answered, "it is because it is not the custom in our Church."

"Well partly so. But suppose we three were to start the custom; what then?"

"Oh, Sir! you could not. You would have no right at all to take it upon yourselves to begin it, however much you might like it once it had begun."

"Exactly so. And now you see what you have said? Because it is not the custom with us, therefore we ordinary clergymen have not been given the power of making clergy. And because we were never given it, we have not now got the power. When we were ordained we were given the power of executing the clerical office, but not the power of passing it on, or giving it away."

"I am not sure that I see the difference."

"Well, I shall take a couple of examples which I think will make you see it. Your brother-in-law, Thomas Harvey, is a partner in the firm of Harvey, Harvey, and Coyle. I remember the day on which the agreement was signed. He can therefore himself

(2). "If a minister be designed to a congregation, who hath been formerly ordained Presbyterian according to the form of ordination which hath been in the Church of England, which we hold for substance to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it; then . . . let him be admitted without any new ordination."—*West. Confess.—Form of Church Government*, Rule 10.

act as one of the firm, but he has no authority to introduce another partner into the business without the consent of the whole firm.

A second case is more exactly what we want. The firm have appointed James M'Mullan porter, and have given him full authority to act as porter himself, and to deliver and receive parcels and goods. But they have not given him authority to appoint additional porters. If he attempted this I am sure they would dismiss him ; and the supposed porter, whom he had pretended to appoint, would neither be paid wages, nor allowed to act, for he would not be a servant of the firm at all. James M'Mullan has been given the right of executing the office of porter, but not the power of passing it on, and giving it away. Well, it is just in the same way that Mr. Smith, Mr. King, and myself, feel ourselves authorised to act as clergymen ourselves, though no one ever gave any of us the power of making other people clergymen."

"Oh ! I see," she said ; "and so it would be very wrong and irregular for you to ordain ministers, because this is not the custom in your Church. But of course there is no harm in Presbyterian or Methodist ministers ordaining, when it is the custom in their Churches."

"No, no," I said, "I am not saying that it would be wrong in us, but that it would be impossible. I say we could not do it. If we wished it ever so, we could no more make a man a clergyman than you could ; and this simply and solely because no one has ever given us the power of doing it. And because we cannot do it, it would be very wrong of us to pretend to do it ; quite as wrong as for M'Mullan to introduce a man into your husband's establishment, and tell him to act as porter. M'Mullan could not make him porter.

Suppose, then, as I said, that Mr. Smith, Mr. King, and I, pretended to ordain a man, he would not be a minister at all, however much we declared he was. Sup-

pose we tried the same on three men one after another, no one of them would be a minister. Suppose further, that these three whom we had pretended to ordain, believed themselves that they were properly ordained, even that belief would not ordain them.

Well now, suppose that these three, who are not really ministers at all, were to join in laying their hands on a second set of three, would that second set be ordained ministers? No, they would not have even as good a pretence as the first three, for those who pretended to give them the office of the ministry had not themselves what they tried to give away. So I might go on to suppose that this second set tried to ordain a third set, the third a fourth, and so on and on. Yet none of all those men, who could only trace back their commission to what had been received from Mr. Smith, Mr. King, and myself, would have any real official position or authority in the Church at all. And the Church could not act as if they had, without sanctioning what we three had done, giving a precedent and encouragement to others to do the same, and throwing discredit and doubt upon all ordinations for all time to come."

"Then you mean to say that the Presbyterian and Methodist and Congregationalist ministers are not really ministers at all."

"Ah! I have not said that. It is you who say it, not I."

"Well, but where did they get their office? and who made them ministers?"

"The present Presbyterian ministers received their authority to act from others, who, like themselves, were only ordinary ministers. Those others had received theirs in the same way from other ministers, who had been appointed by others. So we can trace them back until we arrive at the year 1560, when this new arrangement was first started in Scotland. At that time the system of ordination by Bishops was as firmly settled there as it is at the present moment

within our Church. Whether it ought to have been so or not, it was still a fact, that none except Bishops had at that time been given any authority to ordain others.

But in that year certain regularly ordained clergymen, who had received from the hands of Bishops neither more nor less than the authority which was given to Mr. Smith, Mr. King, and me, determined, with the consent of several lay people, to break through that established custom. Six such clergymen and thirty-six laymen met together in the year 1560, and resolved that men were henceforth to be made ministers 'with no other ceremonies than the public approbation of the people and the declaration of the chief minister.' This chief minister, however, you will remember, was not to be a Bishop, or anyone who had ever been expressly authorised to ordain, but only the most respected of the ordinary ministers present.

Thus that little company volunteered to vote that they had this Divinely ordained office to give away, although no existing branch of the Church of Christ authorised them to do so; and then volunteered to hand down (*without handing down*) an invisible something which they said was the ministerial office."

"Why did they not lay their hands upon the candidates as the Apostles are in the Bible said to have done?"

Because they wanted to break off, in the most marked way, from what they thought the corrupt practices of the whole of Christendom. They did, by this wanton act, break deliberately off from the Church into which they had been baptised, and now their descendants are indignant with us because we treat them as if they had broken off."

"Then you mean to say that the office which all Presbyterian ministers hold now came down only from that little company, and merely by word of mouth, without the outward ceremonial of laying on of hands."

"Not exactly that. I do say that this was the first

open act of separation from the customs of the Christian Church in that matter. But it was too gross a violation of ancient and Apostolic practice for anyone to tolerate long. The ceremony of laying hands upon the heads of the candidates for the ministry was soon restored. And, as many episcopally ordained ministers afterwards joined the sect thus formed, and took part in ordinations, I think there is more than an even chance that the office which Presbyterian ministers hold now has come down to them from the sixteenth century, through men who had as much right as Mr. Smith, Mr. King, and I would have now to ordain men."

"That is from men who could not ordain them at all. And so you mean to say that those who started the Presbyterian way of ordaining in 1560, had no power at all to ordain. But of course they thought they had, and perhaps they were right in thinking so, in spite of you."

"I cannot see how they could possibly have been right. It is of course conceivable (though not the fact) that the authority to ordain may have once belonged to the ordinary clergy, and that the Bishops unfairly took it away from them. Still the fact remains that, if the power had once been theirs, the universal Church had restrained the Presbyters from ordaining, and thus the power was no longer theirs. They might have tried to force the Bishops to restore it to them, but it was absurd to vote that it had been taken away from them, and kept from them for fourteen hundred years, and yet that it was in their possession all the while. If a band of robbers had stolen your grandfather's silver watch, you might very properly lament over the loss, and denounce the outrage, but still the watch would be away. You would be acting like a lunatic, if you proceeded first to vote that the watch had been taken away; then that you had it all the while; and lastly proceeded to hand over to your son a watch which looked extremely

like the original, telling him to cherish it with the greatest pride and affection, because it was his great grandfather's watch. I do not deny, of course, that this new watch of yours may, in many ways, be very useful to your son and his descendants; or that it may in course of time come to have a certain interest and value of its own. But I do say that it never can become your grandfather's watch, which you can never have again, unless those robbers repent and restore it to you, or unless you manage in some way to get it from them."

"That sounds well enough. But I am not quite sure that it is all right. Surely, if the law allows me to vote at the elections, and I find it out, all the time that my woman's rights have been kept from me, would not make it wrong of me, or impossible for me, to vote at the next election. If ministers have, according to the Bible, the right of ordaining ministers, then any man who is a minister, may use that right as soon as he finds out he has it."

"True; that is a very good answer to my example of the watch. It shews that everything depends upon whether the power of ordaining *necessarily* belongs to the ordinary ministerial office. But if it does, if it is a *necessary* part of the ordinary clergyman's office, then any one Minister may ordain at any time and in any way he pleases; and the Presbyterians themselves do not believe this. All that their confession declares is, that it is 'in the whole Presbytery,' and is to be exercised not by every Presbyter (that is, every Minister), but only 'by those Presbyters to whom it belongs' (3).

(3). "1. No man ought to take upon him the office of a minister of the Word without a lawful calling. 2. Ordination is always to be continued in the Church. 3. Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some publick Church office. 4. Every minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands and prayer, with fasting, *by those preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong.* 5. The power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in *the whole Presbytery*, which, when it is over

How does it belong to one Presbyterian more than to another, and what power have a Presbytery over it, if it is an absolute essential in the office of each Presbyterian? If, then, the Presbyterians are right in supposing that an ordaining Minister has not the power to do it of himself, and that he may be deprived of it by others, then the power is like a watch, which may or may not be taken away, and my illustration holds. If they are wrong, and you are arguing for some imaginary people, who have not yet appeared, those imaginary people must prove that there is something in the nature of the ordinary clergyman's office which makes it necessarily self-propagating.

Certainly a man who is made a magistrate, or a footman, or a porter, or a sexton, has not necessarily the power of authorising others to act in the same capacity. The assertion that a Minister of the Church has, would need some proof; and those who make the assertion are bound to shew, not only that some Presbyters did now and then execute it *with permission*; but that our Lord and the Apostles gave all Presbyters the powers of ordaining so *absolutely*, that none have ever had the power of interfering with it, or taking it away from them.

In very truth, so far were even the Divines who met at Westminster from thinking that the Presbyterian mode of ordaining was the original or proper one, that they seem to apologise for it on the ground that that was an exceptional time, and needed exceptional behaviour" (4).

more congregations than one, whether those congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of officers or members, it is indifferent as to the point of ordination.—*West. Confess.—Form of Church Government: Touching the Doctrine of Ordination.*

(4). "11. In extraordinary cases, something extraordinary may be done, until a settled order may be had, yet keeping as near as possibly may be to the rule. 12. There is at this time (as we humbly conceive) an extraordinary occasion for a way of ordination for the present supply of ministers."—*West. Confess. On the Form of Church Government.*

"I am not sure," she answered, "that I understand all that; but I take it that you believe that those people had no right at all to begin a new system, and that what the Presbyterian Ministers are so solemnly handing over at each of their ordinations is not the office of the Ministry at all."

"Well, I say this. Whatever it is, it is not an office which the rest of the Church can officially recognise as the office of Priest, or Presbyter, which has been regularly handed down from the Apostles of Christ to us, through a line of officers authorised to hand that office down.

Remember, however, that I do not deny that their office has a sacredness and a value of its own. I do not doubt that God has been pleased to make use of it, in the converting and comforting and teaching and strengthening of the souls of many of His people. Presbyterians have all been regularly admitted into the Church of Christ by the one Divinely-appointed mode of admittance, that is to say, by Baptism. They are thus all within the Christian covenant, and the communions into which they form themselves are Christian communions. Those also, whom they are pleased to appoint to any office within their own communion, have the full right to exercise all the authority with which that communion may have invested them. But I still say that theirs is not, and cannot be, the particular office in the Church of Christ which has been handed down to us, but not to them."

"But the Methodists; is it the same with them?"

"Not exactly. John Wesley was (like John Knox) an ordained Priest or Clergyman in the Church of England. But he did not think (what John Knox did) that the Church was wrong in what it taught about Episcopacy, or that any but Bishops have the power of ordaining. He did not intend to make his ordinary preachers Clergymen, or profess to give them any authority at all except his own. He did not call them, or allow them to call themselves, Clergymen.

He did not at all mean to form a Church (5). But he felt a burning desire to stir men out of the coldness and apathy which he saw everywhere in the Church. For this purpose he gathered all the like-minded together, and sent out many teachers of his peculiar method of stirring men. But by whatever ceremony he appointed them, he did not allow these teachers to forget that they were not Church clergymen, but only John Wesley's teachers (6). Nor have they yet commenced to call themselves Priests or Presbyters; nor did they even count themselves clergymen until very recently indeed. Their own earlier documents speak of them as 'Preachers' only, or 'Wesleyan ministers' and these are correct titles of the only office which John Wesley had the power of giving them, an office in the very remarkable society which he formed.

Of course the Methodists must have some way of looking at the facts of the case which I cannot understand, or they could hardly attempt to justify their position except upon the ground of a hard necessity.

(5). "2. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London, and then in other places. Such a society is no other than a company of men having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."—*Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists*, by John and Charles Wesley, May 1, 1743.

(6). John Wesley was, indeed, at last reluctantly persuaded to acquiesce in some of his preachers administering sacraments, if we can rely on some of the biographies which have been written of him. And he certainly did, in company with a few other Presbyters of the Church of England, appoint an ordained clergyman, Thomas Coke, as a superintendent over the Methodist societies in America, authorising him to act *among them* very much as the Bishops do in the Church, and so gave rise to the opinion that he believed he had authority to ordain Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and also formed the origin of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But this was only a few years before Wesley's death, and he never once claimed that any Branch of the Church should recognise his Superintendent as a Bishop, or his Preachers as Priests in the Church of Christ.

But I think they would not themselves dispute what I am saying, but assert that Wesley's method is so very valuable, and the influence of his Society so very good, that the office which their ministers hold from him is more practically useful than our regular clerical office, which is pretty sure to lead to sacerdotalism, and high views of the Church and the Church sacraments."

"But surely that sounds as bad as bad can be. They could not say that. That would be like saying that the Society which Wesley founded was better than the one our Saviour founded, and the posts which Wesley had to give away were more practically useful and honourable than those which our Lord Jesus gave away."

"Indeed you are right. That last explanation cannot be theirs. Yet there are many things which look like it. And it has often struck me as most sad and strange that so many thousands of baptised Christians should be content to call themselves after the name of a mere man and his method of teaching. I have no doubt at all that it would have been a heavy grief to Wesley himself, if he could have foreseen that his Society, which he meant to be a sort of brotherhood and sisterhood within the Church of England, as the Dominicans and Franciscans are within the Church of Rome, would have grown into a Society separated from us, and often hostile to us. But in any case, whether they are hostile to us or friendly, whether they do or do not claim recognition, the office that Wesleyan ministers or Methodist preachers hold, is not one that we recognise as the same with our office, or indeed a regular office in the ministry of the Church of Christ."

"Of course you would say the same of the Congregationalist ministers."

"Certainly. Their case is still weaker. The Presbyterians and Methodists can trace back their orders to the Apostles, the first through John Knox and others, the latter through John Wesley, *if orders could*

be transmitted by a line of ordinary clergy. But the Congregationalist ministers receive all their authority from their congregations, and not from above. They are, indeed, the ministers of their people, and I should suppose that even Presbyterians would insist upon re-ordination before they would admit them to any pastoral charge."

"Well then, the Roman Catholic priests, and the clergy of the Greek Church, are they none of them clergy in the Church of Christ?"

"Ah! There you come to quite a different matter. We differ from the Greek Churches in many things. We differ from the Church of Rome in so many doctrines and customs that we are completely out of communion with her. But in this one matter we are all agreed. We acknowledge that the offices of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon, have been regularly handed down among them from generation to generation, as carefully as they have been among ourselves. The offices that their Bishops and clergy are exercising are the regular offices of the Christian ministry, handed down from the original and Apostolic appointment, and the whole Church is bound to recognise them as such. We do acknowledge them, even while those who hold them are teaching many errors, and either ignoring or opposing us, whose offices are quite as authoritative as theirs. If they would only forsake their errors of doctrine and practice, and come back to the pure teaching of the Apostolic and primitive times, they would at once be in full communion with us, and we could arrange to work all together."

"Do you mean to tell me that, if a Roman Catholic priest came over to us, he would at once be received as a clergyman, but that a Presbyterian or Methodist minister would have to be ordained before he could be put in charge of a parish?"

"Certainly I do. The one has a regular office, which we can recognise without injuring our own; but the others have not, and we cannot pretend they have."

- “Then that proves that we are far nearer the Roman Catholics than we are to our fellow-Protestants.”

“In form of Church government, it does of course. Our boast is, that we hold and hand down the pure faith of Christianity, for which the Reformers died, without having ever interrupted or broken the ancient order and discipline of the Church of Christ. The Roman Catholics keep, in that same ancient order, all the crust and scum of exaggeration and error, which have gradually gathered round the faith once delivered to the saints. The one point in which we differ from them is this matter of error and exaggeration. On the subject of order and discipline we are to a considerable extent in agreement with them.

Ancient vessels, suppose, have been handed down to us all, containing a very precious liquid. After some hundreds of years, this liquid is discovered to have been fouled and injured. The Roman Catholics look upon this discovery as a delusion, and persist in using it exactly as it now is, insisting that this is the liquid which was originally given to them. We, in our Church, purify and strain out with the greatest care all the impurity and foreign matter, and we insist that by this apparent innovation of the filter we have really preserved the original gift. The Protestant Dissenters have broken, or thrown away the ancient and valuable vessel in their rougher straining. And we believe that, in pouring the liquid into their modern and less suitable vessels, they have lost some precious elements of the liquid. But they insist against us that theirs alone is pure, and their new vessel modelled exactly after some original and better pattern. In such a case you will see that, whenever an argument rises about the vessels, we shall seem to be entirely agreed with the Roman Catholics; and whenever the question is about the rightfulness of using a filter at all, we shall seem entirely agreed with the Dissenters; but whenever it is an enquiry into the exact elements of the original liquid, we shall be

found alone, contending for a little more than the Protestant Dissenters, and a little less than the Roman Catholics. Yet our agreement with the Roman Catholics on one subject does not prove that we are Romanists at heart, any more than our agreement with the Dissenters on other points would prove that in the main we were with them.

The fact is that the main thing which a Roman Catholic priest has to change in order to join us, is his doctrine, and this has been done whenever he has come over to us. But the one essential and visible difference which all Protestant Dissenters are agreed in setting between themselves and us is this about the Christian ministry. Therefore, until they believe that their offices are not valid, and not binding except upon their own body only, they have not really joined us. And if ever they do join us in this matter, they will desire the regular ordination of their ministers by our Bishops, as a boon and not a grievance. So I always tell a Presbyterian minister, if he attacks me on this point, that we shall not compel him to be re-ordained if he comes over to us ; but that if ever he does join us, he will ask for ordination as a favour, and refuse to act as a clergyman until our Bishop has authorised him to do so."

"I am to understand then," she said, "that you do not believe that Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Congregationalist, or (I suppose) Baptist ministers, have the ministerial office, or are clergymen in the sense in which your Church clergy are."

"Yes," I said, "that expresses my meaning pretty well. Only remember that what I say is exactly this : *They have no office which we can officially recognise as such.* God's thoughts are not our thoughts. He is not tied as we are tied, and we are sure that He does bless, in just the right measure, every earnest attempt by every faithful servant of His to do His work and advance His kingdom. I think I am glad to know this, and to feel that God the Holy Ghost is working

His glorious work, often through means which it would not be right for me with my knowledge to use, and within communions for which it would be disastrous and sinful in me to give up the greater privileges which He has vouchsafed to give me.

So, even when I speak most strongly about the happiness of having an official position in the Church of Christ, which has come to me from those whom He authorised to give commissions in His army, you must not fancy that I am overvaluing this. I know that neither my office, nor my ordination to it, makes me a better or a cleverer man than those who have not been given it. It is but a Divinely appointed instrument which He has placed in my hand, and, according to my use of it, it may prove either a blessing, or else a curse to me. It may be found at last to have only added to my responsibilities and increased my condemnation.

Still, the knowledge that I have, indeed, been given by God an office in the 'ministry of reconciliation,' and that I am an accredited ambassador for Christ (⁷), ought to make me most reverent and earnest in fulfilling the great commission which has thus been entrusted to me. And I think, Mrs. Harvey, that the remembrance of this ought to help you to feel more and more the truth and the preciousness of the Divine message. It was to guard, and proclaim, and enforce this, that the Lord Jesus Christ formed the wondrous Society, whose framework and offices have been preserved to us by the providential care of our heavenly Father."



CHAPTER XIV.

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION SHEWN TO BE NEITHER ABSURD NOR BLASPHEMOUS.

“**W**HERE were you this afternoon, Uncle?” asked Hazlewood. “I thought you were to have been at home to meet the Hargreaves.”

“I thought myself I should have been ; but I was drawn into a discussion about Apostolic succession, and of course I had to see it out.”

“Apostolic succession ? And which of your people have you been perverting on that point ?”

“I do not know that any one was exactly perverted, as you are pleased to call it. But I was trying to explain to Mrs. Harvey a part of what I believe about it.”

“Well, I must say I cannot conceive how any one of any common sense can accept that absurd relic of mediæval superstition.”

“What absurd relic ?”

“Apostolic succession. The notion that you can trace your orders up step by step to the very hands of the Apostles ; the intolerant idea that, if you can detect the slightest flaw in any ecclesiastical pedigree, down that whole Church goes instantly into the uncovenanted mercies of God.”

Common sense ? It seems to me to be absolute blasphemy to speak so of the Holy Ghost, as if you were talking about an electric spark, which runs along a copper wire, and, if any mistaken or malignant

creature ever cuts the wire or breaks it, at once the poor spark is helpless, vanishes, or (for all I know) actually ceases to exist. I should like to know what special virtue there can be in the tips of a Bishop's fingers, that a grace will run along them and along nothing else. And to think of such Bishops as——!

"Gently, Frank, gently. You know I like to do most of the talking myself; so please let me get in a word or two before you have quite demolished me, and exhausted the whole subject. Where in the world did you get that notion of Apostolic succession?"

"Where? Why all the world knows that that is what you mean by it. Each Bishop of to-day claims to have a pedigree which he can trace back to S. Peter himself. And in this pedigree you think there has never been a flaw or a mistake, and you proclaim that all along this line a special holiness is passed down, which never can be gained through any except episcopal fingers."

"All the world knows it? Perhaps so; but you are so unusually hot about it to-day, that I am sure you must have heard something about it very lately."

"Oh! I was looking at a small pamphlet which I found lying upon your study table just now. But it told me nothing new. It only reminded me of what I had known before."

"I thought so. It was sent to me anonymously this morning; and a very ridiculous pamphlet it is. It does give very much that view of Apostolic Succession, and I am not at all sure that it expresses it much more mildly than you have done. And then it proceeds to denounce it and demolish it very satisfactorily. But if you and I are to discuss this question, as I hope we shall, I must ask you to begin by trying to suppose that I am not quite a fool. I do not hold the absurd and (as you rightly call it) irreverent and blasphemous notion about God the Holy Spirit's mode of working upon human hearts, which you seem to think I hold. More than this, there is no good in

underrating the strength of an adversary's case ; and I must advise you to try to suppose that there does still remain in the heads of even High Churchmen a little common sense. Those who accept Apostolic Succession as a fact are not all fools or idiots, nor are they all blasphemers of God."

"Now you know I never really thought that. But I must say that I do think that theologians sometimes (like other people) allow their theories to run away with them ; and so are carried to conclusions which they would be the very first to reject, if they heard them expressed in the common English of every-day life."

"Very likely ; and on the other side I must say that I do think that your common-sense people sometimes treat theologians very unfairly. They first refuse to hear our definitions of our own technical terms ; and they then insist that those terms must have a meaning which makes our dogmas monstrous ; and then they conclude by charging us with believing the monstrosities which they themselves have created. However let us now try to bring out this terrible bugbear into the broad daylight of your common sense. And I pledge myself to renounce it, if you can shew me that it is either absurd, blasphemous, or untrue."

"Well ; is it not very much what I said it was ?"

"It is not. And for this reason in the first place : The succession of which we speak is a succession of offices and not of persons."

"A distinction without a difference, as far as I can see."

"Well, I think you will see the difference if I put it in this way. The grace of which we speak is a gift of office and authority, not any conscious impression upon the heart at all. And we do not think that even this gift is attached to the person or fingers of the Bishop, but only to the office that he holds. We do not make the official succession depend upon the persons, as if the Bishops in any particular see

depended upon each other like the links in a chain. If they did, then any flaw in any one link, any mistake in the consecration of any one Bishop, would necessarily destroy the authority of all his successors. But a few minutes' thought will shew you that this is not our case. Take the list of Bishops in any particular see. You will find each Bishop stepping into the place just *vacated* by his predecessor. But hardly any Bishop has ever been *consecrated* by his predecessor, or received his authority from him.

The present Bishop of Derry, for example, succeeded Bishop Higgin, who succeeded Bishop Ponsonby, who succeeded Bishop Knox, who succeeded the Earl of Bristol.

But the present Bishop did not receive his authority from Bishop Higgin, who died before Dr. Alexander was consecrated. He received his office from Dr. Beresford, Archbishop of Armagh, assisted by two other Bishops. Any flaw therefore which may some day be discovered in the consecration of Bishops Higgin, Ponsonby, or Knox, would not in the least weaken the present Bishop's authority to exercise the office, since his orders are not derived from them, but through the combined action of three other Bishops.

The same may be said for each of his predecessors. The history of a particular see, or bishopric, is not at all a history of the pedigree of the present occupants of that see. And thus our declaration that there is an Apostolic Succession in the Church of England means—not that each Bishop can trace his own pedigree back to the hands of the Apostles, but—that we can trace the office which our Bishops are now exercising back to the Apostles' times. It means that the office which our Bishops are now exercising, is not the creation of certain individuals in the sixteenth or any other century, but has a continuous and unbroken history; that with the introduction of Christianity into Great Britain the Episcopal office was introduced also, by those who had authority to introduce

it. And it means further, that this authority of those introducers was a thing that had been given to them authoritatively, and can be traced back and back, until we find its origin in the commission given by our Lord to His twelve Apostles."

"This is only your own version of Apostolic Succession, and not what the High Church clergy mean by it."

"Not at all. I might refer you to the language of Hooker⁽¹⁾, who (I suppose you know) is universally quoted as a judicious exponent of Church teaching. But I prefer taking the one Book by which we are all bound, our Book of Common Prayer. The only definition of Apostolic Succession which is found in that Book, is in the Preface to the Ordinal, and it is this :—'It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which offices were evermore held in such reverent estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are

(1). "To succeed the Apostles is after them to have that Episcopal kind of power which was first given to them."—Hooker's *Eccl. Pol.* bk. vii. sec. 4. "The doctrine of Apostolical Succession means that, according to the institution of Christ, a ministry ordained in due form by (Episcopal) succession from the Apostles, and so from our Lord Himself, is an integral part of that visible Church of Christ upon earth to which Christian men are to be joined."—Haddan's *Apostolical Succession*, chap. i. p. 1. These quotations are made for the purpose of shewing what Apostolical Succession is in itself, not what inferences are drawn from it. Nor is it forgotten that there are some who do attach the grace to the persons of the Bishops, notably Dr. Huband Gregg, so-called Bishop of the Reformed Church of England. He, starting a crusade against Apostolical Succession, travelled more than a thousand miles to secure Apostolical Succession for himself, at the hands of individuals, who had been irregularly consecrated (?) by an individual Bishop, whose right to consecrate them was not acknowledged by any Branch of the Church. (See chap. iii., note 2.)

requisite for the same ; and also by publick Prayer with Imposition of hands were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority. And therefore to the intent that these orders may be continued and reverently used and esteemed in the United Church of England and Ireland ; no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in the United Church of England and Ireland, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereto according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal consecration or ordination.'

There you have—First, the assertion of the continued existence of these offices from the Apostles' times ; Secondly, the assertion that those who exercised them were invested with them "by lawful authority with imposition of hands;" and Thirdly, a direction for handing down these offices unimpaired within the United Church of England and Ireland, by the refusal to allow any to execute those functions unless after *Episcopal* consecration or ordination. Here is indeed an assertion of Apostolic Succession through Episcopal consecrations and ordinations, yet a succession of offices not persons."

"Yet even so, I am not sure that this does not require still a succession of persons, as you call it. For if any one Bishop's consecration was informal, he did not hold the office at all. None of his acts were Episcopal acts, and all whom he seemed to consecrate or ordain were without authority to act or pass on their offices, and the line was paralysed and dead from the moment of that Bishop's supposed consecration."

"There are two answers to that. In the first place the Church has ever since the Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325, or perhaps the Council of Arles, A.D. 314, required as a matter of precaution though not of necessity⁽²⁾, the presence of three Bishops at the consecration

(2). Theodoret. lib. v. c. 23.

of a Bishop. This would render each fresh consecration valid, even if one or other of those taking part had a flaw in his own title, since one Bishop's authority is sufficient to confer the office. The offices may thus be regularly handed down in spite of an occasional fraud or informality in the appointment of a particular Bishop. Yet we defy you to point out any real breaks in the lines along which our orders have been handed down to us (3).

A second answer is, that the succession being one of offices not of persons, it would not distress any sensible person to find that there had been a secret informality in some Bishop's title to the office that he exercised. The wilful departure of a number of persons, or congregations, or an entire Branch of the Church, from the order and discipline established by our Lord and His Apostles is one thing; and a mistake as to the actual facts in an individual case is another and a very different thing. If, for example, the Synod of the Church of Ireland were to enact that Presbyters, alone and without the co-operation and assistance of a Bishop, should ordain to the offices of the ministry, then that would be a deliberate usurping of powers which are not theirs, and what was thenceforward given away at each ordination, would not be the ancient office of a Priest (or Presbyter) in the Church of Christ, but only a new office in a new Irish Society founded in Dublin in such a year.

But if nothing like this happens, and if I only discover suddenly that there was some obscure informality about the consecration of the particular Bishop who presided at my ordination, it would cause me no real uneasiness as to my call to the Christian ministry. I know that the office which he seemed to hold was a *bona fide* Episcopal office in the Church of Christ, regularly exercised from generation to generation, and that the branch of the Church in which he seemed to have

(3). See *Apostolical Succession in the Church of England*. by Rev. A. W. Haddan (Rivington's), chap. vii., viii.

been invested with it honestly believed his consecration to have been regular. In his act of ordaining me, he acted as the holder of that office, recognised as such by his metropolitan and the other Bishops of his province, the sanction of whose authority was thus given to every public official act of his. My authority to execute the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, resting upon the office and not the person of the Bishop who ordained me, has the sanction of the Episcopate of the Church of Ireland, has been conferred upon me by that Episcopate, and is entirely independent of any small informality, which an ingenious eye may be able to detect in the way in which the Church's undoubted intention to consecrate a particular Bishop was carried out."

"I see now the reason why you lay such stress upon your distinction between the persons and the offices. But it now strikes me that, if this is all which is meant by Apostolic succession, the thing is nothing more than the claim which would always be put forward for the officers of any ancient and regularly conducted society. They always claim to be the *regularly appointed* officers, deriving their authority from those who had a constitutional right to appoint them."

"Exactly so. Yet you see what excitement there is when any officials of the Church say that they can shew the same kind of regularly derived authority, which officials in any other society would be required to shew.

The explanation of this excitement lies in the supernatural element which belongs to our society. Founded by the Son of God, invested with heavenly rights, and endowed with supernatural gifts for this present time, and with a promise of a glorious inheritance in the life to come, it is not wonderful that the claim to hold in such a society an office derived from its Divine Founder's own commission, should be most earnestly maintained on the one side and disputed upon the other.

Evidently such a claim can only be made good, when the authority to act can be shewn either to have come directly and supernaturally from heaven itself (as the Irvingites fancy is the case with their so-called apostles, appointed by the decree of their so-called prophets); or else to have been handed down along an unbroken line which began with those who were directly commissioned by Christ to hand it down.

Apostolic Succession therefore, or a direct supernatural revelation from heaven for each appointment, these are the only two means by which authority to act as ambassadors for Christ can be shewn.

And observe, the authority which started the ministerial line being Divine, it is exactly the same all through the line as that which would create supernaturally a new staff of officials. We therefore, who have the succession, have no need to make such a claim as is made by the Irvingites; much less to accept a renewed commission at the hands of their (so-called) apostles, having already a Divine Commission regularly transmitted to us by our Incarnate Lord's own appointed way." (*See Note B.*)

"But," he asked "can you really maintain this claim? Is it quite certain that your 'Orders' (as you call them) have always been handed regularly down? I suppose they have been so since the Reformation, because your Bishops are always consecrated publicly, and their consecration has usually attracted a good deal of attention because of the income and rank which are attached to them. If there ever had been a flaw, some disappointed clergyman, or at least some Roman Catholic or Dissenting newspaper would have been sure to have got news of it, and spread the story far and wide. I suppose then that your orders have been always handed regularly down ever since the Reformation. But surely there must have been a break there. None of the Roman Catholic Bishops would have been so ultra-liberal as to have consecrated a Protestant Bishop. The first must surely have taken

the office upon himself, or been consecrated by ordinary clergymen, and then volunteered to consecrate others."

"Do you really think I would have talked as I have, if I had any suspicion that that had been the case?"

"I do not know," he answered. "But I cannot see how else the first Protestant Bishop can have been consecrated, when all previous Bishops must have been Roman Catholics.

Or, wait a minute. I remember seeing a little history of England on a stall outside the chapel-yard, when the Redemptorist fathers were in the town. There was a picture of Queen Elizabeth on the cover. She had a bunch of large keys hanging from her waist like a chatelaine, and she was laying her hand on the head of a Bishop who knelt before her; and it was called, 'The Consecration of the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury.' If that was a fact, then your orders are only derived from Queen Elizabeth, and not at all from the Apostles."

"I remember seeing the little book. And I confess I could not help laughing at the impudence of the falsehood, before I quite realised the unchristian malignity which could thus impose upon the ignorant a statement, which those who compiled and those who circulated the history must all have known to be an unfounded falsehood. No. The Roman Catholics did invent a false account of Archbishop Parker's consecration; but it was not that.

In the year 1604, forty-five years after the consecration had taken place, they started (upon the authority of a conversation, said by an exiled Roman Catholic priest to have passed between a Mr. Neale and some one else) the false report that Dr. Scory (consecrated Bishop of Chichester in 1551, and deprived on account of his Protestantism) had met Parker, and others whom the Queen had selected, at the Nag's Head Inn, and laid a Bible on each of their heads, and told them that that act consecrated them, and

they were thenceforth to count themselves Bishops. No sooner was this absurd report started than its contradiction came at once. What took place in the Nag's Head Inn was only a dinner to commemorate the Queen's confirmation and acceptance of the Church's consecration of the Bishops. *And at that dinner the Bishops were not present.* Archbishop Parker was consecrated alone, according to Edward the Sixth's Ordinal, in Lambeth Chapel, by four Bishops whose orders had been previously recognised in the Church of Rome, and who were now authorised by commission under the Great Seal of England.

Four of the most eminent public Notaries in England were present and recorded the fact, which was registered in the Register of the See of Canterbury, and the record remains to this day."

"How was it possible to secure four Roman Catholic Bishops, who would consent to such a consecration?"

"Very easily. The Reformation was no more a thing of a day, or a year, than the growth of Romish corruption had been. There were many ebbings and flowings of the tide of the Reformation, and Bishops had been consecrated some at the ebb and some at the flow. Some before their consecration, and some afterwards sympathised with the Reforming movement. Some of these had been prevented by force from exercising their office, or enjoying its emoluments, during the reign of Queen Mary. But as soon as she was dead the force was removed, and they were free once more to exercise the authority to ordain, which had been given to them at their consecration, and of which none could deprive them.

The Reformation was in full force again after Queen Mary's death, and these Bishops were glad to help it forward. Nor was there either difficulty or danger in their so helping it. Both the Sovereign and the popular feeling were entirely in favour of it. The Churches were all open to them, and there was no need to search for a tavern in which to consecrate

stealthily the man chosen by the Crown and approved by the people. They had every conceivable motive for publicity and regularity and none at all for secrecy. Accordingly there was full publicity. The Queen's letters patent, with the Great Seal of England attached, may still be seen. They were issued to six Bishops in the first instance. But an informality was discovered in this issue, and they were again issued to Anthony, Bishop of Llandaff; William Barlow, sometime Bishop of Bath, now elect Bishop of Chichester; John Scory, sometime Bishop of Chichester, now elect Bishop of Hereford; Miles Coverdale, sometime Bishop of Exeter; Richard, Suffragan Bishop of Bedford; John, Suffragan Bishop of Thetford; and John Bale, Bishop of Ossory. These letters direct these seven Bishops, or *not less than four of them*, to consecrate Master Matthew Parker Archbishop of Canterbury, and are dated December 6th, in the second year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Accordingly, upon the ninth day of December, in the same year, Barlow, Scory, Coverdale, and John, Bishop of Bedford, met in Bowes Church and solemnly confirmed the election. Eight days afterwards, that is on the seventeenth day of December, A.D. 1559, the same Bishops proceeded to the consecration of Archbishop Parker in the Lambeth Chapel, with solemn Prayers and Sermon and the Holy Eucharist; at which 'great numbers of grave persons' communicated with him at that time (4).

Thus the line, which had come down without a break to the year 1559, passed safely through the great crisis of the Reformation, and remains unbroken still. In the same way the line was preserved in Ireland. The Bishops in a body accepted the Reformation, so far at least as to consecrate the men selected by the Crown for the sees which fell vacant. The Bishops of Kildare and Meath were the only Bishops who

(4). Archbishop Bramhall's works, tom. i, discourse v. pp. 427-489. See also *Apostolical Succession*, by Haddan, chap. vii.

openly defied the Royal supremacy, and had to be deprived of their office; though the assent of others seems to have been heartless and temporary. The Crown had, therefore, no need to apply to the English Bishops to transmit the authority to ordain, for the consecrations were effected with full canonical exactness in every case by the then existing Irish Bishops. And ever since, as you have observed, there has been no chance of a flaw escaping detection.”⁽⁵⁾

“Well, but this only amounts after all to a proof that your Church officers have always been regularly appointed by lawful authority, and that every branch of the Church of Christ, whether or not they agree with you on other points, ought at least to recognise your Bishops, Priests, and Deacons as holding office in the Christian Church.”

“Exactly so. This is precisely what we mean by Apostolic succession, a thing which you called an absurd and blasphemous relic of mediæval superstition. You see you were (like many others) mixing up with this matter of Apostolic succession another and much more subtle question—namely, the question whether God Almighty invariably gives a spiritual help and influence to every individual who is duly invested with any of the three offices in the Christian Ministry. That is a question to which Churchmen would give you extremely different answers; and for my part I am quite unable to say anything more about it than this :—God Almighty does give just the right amount of spiritual help to each member of His Church according to his own vocation and ministry. But I am not going to discuss that question now. Apostolic succession is utterly and entirely distinct from individual notions as to the spiritual feelings and impulses which do or do not go along with the succession. It is concerned simply and solely with offices in the spiri-

(5). See quotation from Haddan's *Apostolical Succession*, at the end of this chapter.

tual society which our Lord founded, each office being treated as a spiritual gift which is handed down from Him."

"Well, but you ought to tell me what practical good comes through Apostolic succession."

"That I shall try to speak about bye-and-bye. All I have been insisting upon now is only the fact of Apostolic succession; that the offices we hold are not newly invented things, that date only from the Reformation. Unworthy as we are who hold these offices of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon, their authority can be traced back to the very fountain-head of Christianity, even to the hands of our Lord and His Apostles.

Thus S. Paul says that his appointment was 'not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead'⁽⁶⁾. He also tells us that he (who was himself so authorised by God) authorised Timothy and Titus to commit this same authority to others⁽⁷⁾. Here are two lines of succession started. Clement, Bishop of Rome also, who is claimed as a fellow-labourer by S. Paul, demands obedience to the clergy of that day on this distinct ground that they were ordained by the Apostles, who had also given 'an order of succession that, when they fell asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry'⁽⁸⁾. In the second century we have the assurances of Hegesippus⁽⁹⁾, Irenæus⁽¹⁰⁾, and Clement of Alexandria⁽¹¹⁾, that the Bishops of

(6). Gal. i. 1.

(7). 1 Tim. v. 21, 22; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Titus i. 5.

(8). See quotation in chap. x. pp. 145, 146.

(9). See quotations in chap. x. pp. 141, 142.

(10). "We are in a position to reckon up those who were by the Apostles instituted Bishops in the Churches, and [to shew] the successions of these men to our own times."—*Irenæus. adv. Hær. lib. iii., chap. 3.*

(11). "The Apostle John, when he settled at Ephesus, went about the neighbouring towns, ordaining Bishops and setting apart such persons for clergy as were signified to him by the Holy Ghost."—*Clem. Strom. lib. vi. p. 667.*

their time had received their authority in regular succession from the Apostles or Apostolic men. In the third century, Tertullian ⁽¹²⁾ and Cyprian ⁽¹³⁾ challenged investigation on this point, proclaiming that the proofs were in their hands, and their proclamation was never put to shame. In the fourth century Apostolic succession was asserted by Augustine ⁽¹⁴⁾, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Epiphanius ⁽¹⁵⁾; while Eusebius thought the point of so much importance that he wrote his history with this special object, to prove that the Bishops in this century held their office in unbroken succession from the Apostles.

From the fourth century onwards, our opponents admit that the succession was guarded with only too jealous a care. They have been again and again challenged to shew any wilful departure at any time from the original practice, or any unauthorised assumption of office on the part of those who have handed

(12). "But if there be any heresies which plant themselves in the midst of the age of the Apostles, that they may therefore be thought to have been handed down from the Apostles, because they existed under the Apostles; we may say, Let them unfold the roll of their Bishops so coming down in succession from the beginning, that their first Bishop had as his ordainer and predecessor some one of the Apostles or of Apostolic men, so he were one that continued steadfast with the Apostles. For in this manner do the Apostolic Churches reckon their origin; as the Church of Smyrna recounteth that Polycarp was placed there by John; as that of Rome doth that Clement was in like manner ordained by Peter. Just so can the rest all shew those whom, being appointed by the Apostles to the Episcopate, they have as transmitters of the Apostolic seed."—*Tertullian de Præscrip. Hæc.* xxxii.

(13). "The power of remitting sins was granted to the Apostles, and to those churches which they who were sent out by Christ founded, and to those bishops who succeeded them in a due and regular course of vicarious ordination."—*Cyprian. Epis. ad. Firmil.* lxxv. p. 225.

(14). "The Christian Church which by sure propagation is spread throughout all the world by means of the Apostolic Sees and successions of Bishops."—*Aug. Ep. ad Medaur.* tom. ii. p. 843.

(15). See above, chap. xii. pp. 185, 186, 187.

down these offices to us. Many have sneered at our assertion, ridiculed the very idea that it can be proved. But none have yet succeeded in laying their fingers upon the weak point, or bringing out the blemish to the light of day. Whatever they think about the necessity for Apostolic Succession, what we mean by it is neither absurd nor blasphemous, but a simple statement of an historical fact which has never been disproved.

And now I shall just read to you a long quotation from Mr. Haddan's very able book.

'No human being doubts the fact of the actual ordination of any clergyman officiating in our Church, and much less of any Bishop, although there has now and then occurred the case, among some myriads of presbyters, of an impostor: and that impostor (let it be added) has been commonly detected. Yet this belief is not founded upon actual inspection of the record of ordination in each case. It rests upon the overwhelming presumption arising from the undoubted doctrine of the Church, from her known practice, from the fixed belief of all her members in the necessity of such ordination, from the fact that Bishops are expressly appointed in order to ordain and on proper occasions ascertain the fact of previous ordination; not to add, in our own case, from the law of the land, which is imperative upon the subject. It would be as much an act of insanity, if serious, or impertinence if not, to demand an actual inspection of the Queen's commission to a particular magistrate, habitually acting as such, before admitting his jurisdiction—supposing there were no extraordinary or personal ground for the demand in the special case,—as to hesitate to accept the fact of the ordination of any particular clergyman, under the like circumstances, without actual investigation and direct proof. And this presumption extends back to the beginning as regards the Church.

From the beginning there has been within the Church the like invariable practice, with the like stress and

sense of obligation enforcing it as a simple matter of course. The care (*e.g.*, of Eusebius) to mark the actual succession in each of the chief sees, is but a specimen of the nature of the evidence of Church history on the subject. The unhesitating assumption of the succession, without even the semblance of a suspicion that any one did or could doubt it, by such writers as Irenæus and Tertullian, may exemplify in like manner the tone of the earliest (as it is also that of all down to the latest) of Church theologians. And when we take into account, in addition to this presumption, the multiplication of the links of ordination, increasing in geometrical ratio as one traces them back, which arises from the practice (broken only in certain countries and at certain times, and marked as all but universal by the very speciality wherewith the exceptions are noticed) of requiring at least three Bishops to every consecration; and when to this we add the constant intercommunion of the whole Church down to the great schism of East and West, so that any possible failure in one part of the Church was sure to be compensated by the unbroken succession of another; the only reasonable inference is that (apart from particular cases, if special cause for doubt or inquiry is anywhere alleged) a man might as fairly doubt of the regular transmission of orders in the Church, even if names and details and written documents could not be produced, as he could with a like absence of a similar kind of evidence, of the natural succession of his own parents and grandparents and so on, from the present time back to the beginning. As a matter of evidence the physical necessity is scarcely a stronger presumption in the one case than the moral necessity is in the other.

And to this presumption it remains to add, that direct evidence does exist to a very remarkable extent: inasmuch as there is actual testimony traceable, proportionate in kind to the particular time and place, to the consecration of almost all diocesan and

suffragan Bishops, with consecrators' names, and date, and place, back to the sixth, and in less detail to the fifth, or even fourth centuries, in nearly every European (and I believe also Eastern diocese) while there are lists of the names of the Bishops in the chief Sees, Eastern and Western, reaching back to the Apostles themselves. Lastly, let it be fairly said, that even if in any one case accident or fraud surreptitiously imposed upon the Church a Bishop or a Priest not really ordained, it is but materialising what it is really moral to doubt that God would supply to the innocent what they rightly sought and reasonably thought they had "" (16).

(16). *Apostolical Succession*, chap. iii., sec. 5, pp. 65-69.





CHAPTER XV.

THE PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT.

“**N**OW,” said my sister, who had joined us during this discussion, “will you answer Frank’s question which he asked a few minutes ago? ‘What is the good of all this?’ I do not know that this is exactly the way in which the question ought to have been proposed. But I should very much like to know what importance belongs to these questions, about orders in the ministry, and about the government of the Church. I have often heard it said, that we agree with the Protestant Dissenters upon all really essential matters, and differ only about lesser and unimportant points. Now I want to know whether this is true; and also, whether this which you have been discussing is a minor point; and whether it really is of very little practical importance what we believe about it.”

“I know,” I said, “that people are continually talking so; as if any truth which God has thought fit to reveal to us can possibly be unimportant; and as if it can possibly be safe to neglect or alter any gift which He has really given to us. Most of these distinctions between important and unimportant points make me think of our Lord’s solemn warning, ‘Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments and teach men so, he shall be called “least” in the kingdom of heaven’⁽¹⁾. His meaning I take to be this:—‘Whosoever shall make these distinctions between Divine commands, explaining that one is great

(1). Matt. v. 19.

and another small, and shall therefore break, or encourage others to break, one which he is pleased to call "small," the kingdom of heaven shall call him "small."

Now our Lord's own commands are certainly quite as Divine and quite as binding upon His disciples, as any of the commandments of 'the law and the prophets' of which He was speaking. And I do wish that Christians would remember His warnnig, and despise nothing, not even the lightest of all His wishes, but treasure up everything which He has taught us, every gift which He has left us. We lose immensely by not doing so ; and we make desperate mistakes whenever we attempt to classify and assert that this is more important than that. How much safer it would be to act with a constant reference to the promise which immediately follows upon the warning :—'But whosoever shall do and teach them' (*i.e.*, these least commandments) the same shall be called "great" in the kingdom of heaven.' That may be considered a sufficient answer to your first question. But I shall add that, if you do think it right to classify, and take the trouble of enumerating the doctrinal differences between us and most of the Protestant Dissenters, you will find them neither few nor small⁽²⁾.

As for your second question, without saying one word about the relative or comparative importance of Church government, I shall try to shew you why I think it is of very serious positive importance, both to the Church of Christ and also to every individual member of the Church.

Yet, indeed, it seems almost blasphemous to question this. To suppose that it matters little whether we keep or reject a form of government which Christ gave to His Church, sounds very like doubting the practical wisdom of the Son of God. It sounds like doubting whether He was as capable as we are of forming a really useful society which should carry

(2). See above, chap. i. pp. 2, 3.

out His designs. Surely we might credit Him with wisdom and forethought. And when we find that He has given us the pure waters of His Gospel in a particular vessel which He specially constructed for them, we might suppose that the vessel also is good of its kind; well fitted for holding these waters, or keeping them pure, and for supplying the world with drink. We might suppose that any change in the structure of this vessel, any loss of any original part of it, must prove a serious loss either to the preserving or else to the imparting of these waters. We might take this for granted.

No man, who has his heart much set upon any great work, will organise carelessly the society to which he intends to entrust that work. So much of any society's success is known to depend upon its rules, machinery, and constitution, that its first promoter always thinks most anxiously about each detail, and, if possible, has its whole system clear to his own mind, before he ventures to launch his enterprise upon the great deep. The Lord Jesus Christ, therefore (who shewed that He remembered how essential the material of the vessel was for the preservation of its contents)⁽³⁾ might surely be supposed to have planned thoughtfully the whole system of the Society, which He founded in order to preserve and teach the message for which He shed His own blood. So, when we find on the one side that He did not Himself write one single line of His whole Gospel, nor even name the particular persons whom He would authorise to write it; and when we find upon the other side that He did not fling His teaching recklessly among a mob, that all might scramble for whatever each could remember and keep of it; but that He formed a visible Society, and entrusted that society with the infinitely important work of collecting

(3). "No man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled and the bottles will be marred; but new wine is put into new bottles."—*Mark ii. 22.*

His teaching, recording it, and winning the world to obey it ; then we may rest satisfied that this Society of His must have been wisely formed, and is a most valuable institution. Its system and constitution cannot possibly be matters of indifference.

I say that we might have taken this for granted, even if nothing had been revealed to us on the subject.

But this natural conviction is immensely strengthened by the actual facts which are recorded about our Lord's great care in forming and instructing that blessed and glorious Society which we call the Church.

The first step towards its formation was His setting apart the twelve apostles ; and S. Luke tells us how thoughtfully and prayerfully He took that step : 'And it came to pass in those days that He went out into a mountain to pray, and *continued all night in prayer to God*. And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples ; and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named Apostles ' (4).

Remember now that this, which He prefaced by a whole night of prayer, was not His first call to these men to follow Him as His disciples, for they were already numbered among His people ; nor was it His sending them upon any immediate mission or work, for that He did not until afterwards ; but it was His first act towards organising and incorporating the Society in which they were to hold office. Does it not stand then as a solemn proof of the importance which He Himself attached to their organisation, and of the care with which He was arranging its whole structure ? The same conviction would follow from the great words of promise which He spoke when the first thoroughly satisfactory confession was made to Him : 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona. . . . And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock *I will build my Church* ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ' (5).

(4). Luke vi. 12, 13.

(5). Matt. xvi. 16-19.

Again I say that the same conviction follows from the wording of the Royal Charter, by which the Church was formally commissioned and endowed for her super-human work. This is a Charter in which we find : —

First, the Preamble, containing the style and title of the Founder; Secondly, the Commission itself, containing a statement both (*a*) of the work for which the Church was incorporated, and also of the means which she was to adopt for (*b*) admitting and (*c*) instructing members; and Thirdly and lastly, the Deed of Gift guaranteeing everlasting provision for the execution of this world-wide work.

Here is the Charter. "Jesus came and spake unto them saying,

1. 'ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN
AND IN EARTH.

2. (*a*) Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, [by]

(*b*) Baptising them in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,
[and by]

(*c*) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

3. AND LO ! I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO
THE END OF THE WORLD. Amen." (6)

Here you must observe that this Charter has commissioned the Church, not merely for the purpose of baptising, and so enrolling new members, but also for the purpose of permanently teaching all members of the Church, and therefore that it needs a *permanent* maintaining of her system and organisation.

Now of course we are all agreed that our Lord's message is of inestimable value, and that personal contact with Himself is the great source of spiritual life; and so, that the grandest work that the Church can accomplish on any one individual is the bringing this message home to his very heart, and so drawing him into this personal and life-giving contact with the

(6). Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20.

Lord of life. There is no dispute about that. But when we are discussing the ways and means by which this message may be brought home to any one's heart, and by which that heart may be kept in closest contact with the One Source of life, then I ask, Is the Society, which He Himself formed and endowed for this very purpose, to be forgotten, or counted of small value?

Yet how can you have contact with a Society as such? How can you gain any good from it *directly* (7), except through its official actions? And what are these official actions?

The bare fact, that two or three friends who meet together happen to be members of the same Society does not of itself make their meeting one of the Society's meetings. There must be some official connection with the Society, some authorisation by its proper officers, in order to give that meeting an official character, and make the Society responsible for what is done there. This rule holds good for Christ's Society, the Church. A pious father may gather his

(7). I might have illustrated my use of this word 'directly' by the familiar case of a total abstinence society. Its members will tell you that it is doing a large amount of *indirect* good, and that the drinking habits of even those who have never become members of it are to some extent altered through its influence. But they insist that you would receive much more good than this from it, if you would become an earnest and regular member of it. Then, they say, you would receive from it directly all the good for which it was organised, and all which it is capable of imparting. They say, of course, that its chief object is to make you a total abstainer, and yet they are not satisfied if you simply pledge yourself to total abstinence, without becoming a regular member of their society. They insist that you would gain greatly in the way of motive and strength, if you would really join them. In the same way the Society which Christ formed for the purpose of resisting evil and promoting good, has a vast *indirect* influence upon the world around it. But even those who are baptised into it are not receiving all the *direct* influence which it is able to impart, unless they are in full and habitual communion with it, and regular in their observance of all its regulations.

children round him for family prayer, and may be very sure that God, who is everywhere present, will hear and answer their supplications. Even twenty or thirty Christian friends may meet together for prayer and the study of God's Word, yet even if one or two of these should happen to be ordained clergymen, such private meetings would not necessarily be Church assemblies or Church worship, nor would any resolutions passed at them become Church teachings. And this because no one, authorised by the Church to form a Church meeting and preside in her name, did so preside, or give the meeting an official character. Now, if the presiding presence, or at least the superintendence in some way, of an official authorised by the Church of Christ for such purposes, is necessary in order to constitute Church Services and Church Sacraments, the questions, Who are such officials? and, Whom has the Church so authorised? seem very serious practical questions for us all.

If there is any genuine good to be derived (in this nineteenth century) directly from the Society which Christ founded and from its official acts (and who can doubt this?), it must be of extreme practical importance to know who are its officers, and what are its official acts.

If I am really authorised to form and conduct the worship of the Church, and to administer in her name the Sacraments of the Church, then I may expect advantages for my people from these ministrations, entirely apart from any personal influence from myself individually. Of course, if any friend of mine needs only the help which would naturally result from personal contact with a saintly character, then I need only introduce him to this or that private Christian. But if he needs such additional blessings as may be expected from Church worship and Church Sacraments, then I take into account the official position of those who profess to offer such, and I direct him to those who are really authorised and empowered to give

these ; those whose authority to act has not emanated from one or two remarkable individuals, or from a little cluster of unauthorised persons, but has come regularly down from the original authority which founded the Society.

All nature ought to teach us the importance for each part of regular and full connection with the organised and living whole. There may of course be sap and life in an unnatural excrescence upon the trunk or branch of a living tree. But the life there cannot be as healthy, or as fruitful, as that which pervades a regular branch with all its parts complete. So a number of individual Christians may have clustered together into a community in which you may find life ; but the spiritual life and training cannot be as healthy there, as if they were a regular branch of the Christian Church, and one which had within itself all the constituent parts of the original system divinely implanted in the Divine Society.

However you look at it, the practical importance of this subject ought to be self-evident. If the Christian Church was built by Christ upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and if there is a real value in every institution of His, then any loss of any part of what he instituted must be a personal loss to each of us. If a ministerial equality was the system which He ordained, then we Episcopalians must be at a real practical disadvantage from the loss of that. But if a threefold ministry was the ministry which He and His Apostles constituted in the Church, and that to which the command applies, 'Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account,'⁽⁸⁾ then rebellion against this ministry, or the loss of it, must be a most serious practical loss for those who have separated themselves from it. In itself, therefore, the subject has a very great direct importance for the Church and for every one of us.

(8). Heb. xiii. 17.

But it has also an indirect importance, because of its close connection with the Gospel message, which everyone professes to value. The two great duties of the Church of Christ are :—First, to preserve from unauthorised additions or mutilations both the constitution which was originally given to her, and also the message originally entrusted to her care; and Secondly, to make use of every part of her divinely-formed system in order to press every part of her divinely-given message upon the whole human race.

Now, the very same spirit of carelessness or arrogance which would prompt anyone to change her constitution, would prompt him also to corrupt her message.

Anything that would lead us to suspect the Church of the one alteration would throw doubt also upon her faithfulness as to the other. Thus they who accept without question the first decided statement which the Christian Church made as to the writings which form the canon of Holy Scripture, are most unreasonable in rejecting her statement of the same date as to the constitution which she had received from the Apostles along with these Scriptures (9).

Indeed, we see at the present day how remarkably any alteration of the Church system draws along with it a corresponding alteration of Church teaching. Take two extreme cases, that the fact may be more strikingly manifest. On the one side, the Roman Communion, which has added the new order of a sovereign Pontiff to the threefold ministry, and has otherwise complicated the machinery of the Church, has also added new dogmas to the primitive faith and otherwise com-

(9). The first catalogue of the Books of the New Testament is the Muratorian Canon, apparently translated from the Greek, and yet of Roman origin, mutilated both at the beginning and end, and written about A.D. 170. Yet it is acknowledged even by opponents of Episcopacy, that at this date the threefold ministry was fully established. Indeed, the evidences of the canonicity of the New Testament Scriptures correspond very strikingly with the evidences for the constitution of the Church; only that the latter are earlier and more distinct. (*See Note A.*)

plicated the Creed of Christendom. On the other side, Quakers and Plymouth Brethren, who have thrown aside the entire organisation and ministry of the Church, have also entirely discarded Creeds, as fetters on Christian liberty and hindrances to the free action of the Spirit of God.

If, then, we could believe that the entire Church of Christ had, before the middle of the second century, allowed the whole constitution to be so corrupted and added to, as the Presbyterians say it was, then its trustworthiness as a witness would have perished for us; the men who invented the hierarchy could have forged parts, or the whole of the Second Epistle of S. Peter, or S. Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Both directly, therefore, and indirectly, this subject is of vital importance to everyone who desires to be loyal to Christ, to hold fast His message, and to make use of all the supernatural gifts which He has bequeathed to us."

And now Andrews, Hazlewood, Mrs. Harvey, and my sister, may be dismissed to the reign of shadows from which they came. If they have enabled me to arrest the attention of a single reader, they have done their work and may be allowed to rest. The one last word with which I desire to close this volume must not be weakened by the presence of fictitious characters.

So far as I know myself, I think I may say that I

(10). As a matter of fact, Baur and De Wette reject the pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus altogether, and mainly upon the ground that they were forged to support the hierarchical system. The Presbyterians of this country are as strongly opposed as Baur and De Wette to the hierarchical system, but they are as loyal believers in the genuineness of these Epistles as we are ourselves. Yet on what principle they accept them, and treat any passages in them which harmonise with their own views as binding now, while any which harmonise with our system are exceptional and obsolete, it would be hard to define.

am not setting in the place of Christ any organisation whatever, not even that Divine Society which He Himself purchased with His own blood, and supernaturally endowed with the unspeakable gift of God, the Holy Ghost the Comforter. I am not resting my personal hope of acceptance with God upon any official connection with this great Society. I know that the one great question for me is always as to my personal hold upon the Incarnate Son of God. I know that (as I have said already in this chapter) the grandest work that the Church can ever do for any one individual is the bringing the message of the Gospel home to his heart, and so the bringing him into personal contact with the Lord of Life Himself.

But I want to have this Gospel kept pure for ever from all addition. I want to have it brought home in Christ's own way to every human heart. I want the members of that Branch of His Church in which I hold my office, to have this Gospel pure, and to have it in their hearts unceasingly. I want, therefore, this Church of ours to retain with reverence and love every separate part of the Divine system, and to remain in full communion with the Holy Corporation of which she has ever been an integral and living part.

I see, indeed, in the vast communion of Rome how awfully possible it is to have a most ingenious system and carefully contrived machinery, and yet use it to exalt the creature above the Creator, and to turn away poor trembling hearts to other mediators and other names from that One Mediator whose Name is above all. Yet I mean to rejoice in the blessed privileges of the ministry which God has preserved to us. I mean to rejoice in the worship and sacraments of the Church, and to feel myself in these to be in communion and fellowship with the whole Catholic Church, in which the Holy Ghost is ever working His supernatural work.

Still, remembering that all Church systems and all Church officers are only means and instruments for

bringing us indeed to God through Christ, I ask every reader to put these questions earnestly to his own heart :—

Has the Church's message been, indeed, brought home to you? Have you really taken your own burden of sin and trouble to the sinner's Friend, and known, if it were even for a moment, the joy of feeling yourself at peace with God and safe in the arms of His infinite love? Are you indeed laying out your life in the service of your blessed Master, who has redeemed you, and many a time forgiven you, and is saving you?

If not,—then all the privileges and means of grace, richly offered to you in the Church, and through the authorised ministry, have as yet been without living effect upon you, and must only rise against you to your greater condemnation. Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, what are they at the best, but 'ministers by whom we believe,'⁽¹¹⁾ and through whom, as by the Lord's own appointed instruments, we may be brought as returning sheep to the one Chief Shepherd, the Divine Bishop of our souls?

• (11). 1 Cor. iii. 5.





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Appendix.

NOTE A.—“ One cannot but ask the earnest attention of all who slight the doctrine of orders and of an Apostolical ministry, to the inevitable result of their denial of it. Men cannot safely, not to say honestly, accept a principle, and choose at their own will to take some of its logical consequences and reject others. And how, then, if the evidence for an Apostolical ministry is to be set aside, is it possible to maintain with consistency either the doctrines of the Creed or the Canon of the New Testament? If all three rest upon evidence of the same kind, and that evidence even more precise in the one case than in the others, then certainly to reject that which is proved the most distinctly, must carry on the reasoner inevitably and *a fortiori* to reject the others too.

Yet how stands the case? Take the last named first. And here our earliest detailed evidence for the text of even the Gospels consists in second century translations, and second century fathers, and a second century list of the books of the Canon, viz., the celebrated Muratorian fragment; fathers indeed, except St. Justin Martyr, of the latter part of the second century, Irenæus and Tertullian. Besides and before these, fragmentary allusions reach back to St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, St. Clement.

If, then, these are sufficient to compel the faith of any reasonable man in the matter of Scripture, as they assuredly are;—if from the fuller details of the later period we are entitled to reason back, lighted by the

glimpse of like details from time to time, to the very period of the Apostles themselves ;—if it be convincingly proved, that the Gospels from which (say) St. Irenæus freely quotes, and which he takes unhesitatingly to be the work of those whose names they bear, must needs be in their full detail what he takes them to be, (1) because in so short a time fictitious writings could not have been unwittingly palmed upon the Church, and least of all upon one who had seen and been intimate with men who were disciples of the Apostles, and (2) because the same Gospels are discerned, when we can discern them at all, wherever allusions are made to them all along the intervening period from Apostolic times down to Irenæus himself ;—and if, lastly, upon the same evidence, we are entitled to include also and upon the same level, not only the passages which Irenæus and the like, or those before him, happen to quote, but the whole book likewise in each case, of which, upon the testimony of subsequent MSS. and translations, these quotations form part ;—if all this be good to prove the Canon of the New Testament, *i.e.*, to prove that the books as we have them came from those whose names they bear ;—then parallel evidence, and that in all points stronger, must be good also to prove the Apostolical succession and ministry.

The drawing up, as it were, of a veil at the end of the second century, discloses to us in the one case the Gospels, with at least the Pauline Epistles, as we have them, in undisputed possession of inspired authority, as having been really written by Apostles or Apostolic men. The same period discloses to us also, in full detail and work, the complete Church system, claiming (and without one word of any consequence raised in any quarter to doubt the claim) to derive a direct Divine commission from the Apostles.

Look backwards ; and the evidence of allusions, plain enough in themselves perhaps, but unmistakeable when read by the light of the later period, is strewn in

both cases along the years back to Apostolic times ; while in the case of Apostolic government those allusions begin as well as end with distinct and formal evidence. Look forward, and time brings its changes,—in the completion of the New Testament Canon by the Church gathering together all her treasures—in the working out of the details of Church government, as occasion required them to be applied rather than supplemented by human wisdom and experience. And in both cases again, false counterfeits present themselves, apocryphal Gospels, or Arian denial of Episcopacy, both alike rejected as novelties and perversions. Substantially, the grounds of evidence, so far, run parallel.

But here the parallel ends. There is express and detailed proof of an Apostolic ministry by due succession, at the close of the first century as well as at the close of the second. And when the New Testament itself is accepted, the key-stone is added to that proof in clear scriptural testimony, as it naturally emerges from the words and acts of the Apostles. But the text of the New Testament, externally, rests for us upon the evidence of the second century at best. We argue back to the words of the inspired writers, from (at the highest) fourth-century MSS., through (at the earliest) partial quotations of Irenæus or Justin Martyr. In the case indeed of the New Testament, the short intervening space of time—perhaps half a century—within which the matter is narrowed, absolutely excludes the hypothesis of the unwitting conversion of subjective imaginations into objective and accepted narratives as of fact. But if so, it still more excludes the possibility of a recognised and complete order of Church ministry having grown, without one hint of hitch or opposition, out of chaos into a settled institution, of which no one doubted but that it had ever been the same. For in the latter case the time is narrowed to a dozen years. In the case of the New Testament, a quotation or an allusion at earlier times

carries with it a reasonable guarantee for substantially the whole document as written down in later MSS., or as reproduced *in extenso* in later translations. In the case of the Church ministry, the like allusions carry back its institution, with the whole of that which the Church ministry is found legitimately to contain, to Apostolic times. And testimony to that Church ministry, of a formal and distinct kind, exists at the beginning as well as the end of this intervening period.

In a word, out of a comparative obscurity the Church emerges at the end of the second century in possession of a Book and a ministry as well as a Creed. And the evidence which connects all three with the beginning is not less continuous and complete, and becomes distinct and express at an earlier date, in the case of the second than in those of the other two. Accept the Book, and then the Creed and the ministry alike find their own one ultimate seal and sanction in that Book itself, and in the fact that they alone exhaust its meaning, and account for its language. But the external evidence for the acceptance of any one of the three as handed down substantially unchanged from Apostolic times is the same in kind. And they who believe, and rightly, in the history of the Book as an objective history of actual fact, and in the Creeds as a true and genuine development of doctrine, must believe much more in a like history, and a like genuineness for the ministry as well."

Apostolical Succession in the Church of England, by Arthur W. Haddan, B.D. (Rivingtons, 1869), chap. v., pp. 125-129.

NOTE B.—In the absence of any better title, the very inadequate name of "Irvingites" is used (chap. xiv., p. 216) to denote those who acknowledge the Divine authority and supernatural gifts of twelve men, who in this century have claimed that they hold a corresponding position in the Church to that occupied by the Twelve Apostles. They believe that, as the Church needed twelve such officers to start her upon

her sacred mission, so she needed also twelve to seal the 144,000, to complete her work, and to present her as a chaste virgin to Christ. There is no need to examine in detail the evidence (?) which they offer for these extravagant demands upon our credulity, since stern facts have sufficiently exposed the delusion. Of the supposed twelve Apostles, who were needed to effect all this, eleven have already passed away without effecting it. Of course they may expect that successors may yet be raised up to take the place of these. But this first theory was unfortunately drawn up with such attention to details as to allow no room for successors. And successors, if they had room for such, could occupy towards the vanished "twelve," only the place now held by our Bishops in relation to the original and genuine Apostles. And in any case the sudden appearance and disappearance of these supposed Apostles are without either cause or effect. But see Mr. Miller's very full and interesting treatise :—*The History and Doctrines of Irvingism*, by Edward Miller, M.A. (Kegan Paul & Co. 1878.)









